Water of Leith

To Stockbridge

Comely Bank

Great King St

Northumberland

Dean Bridge

Moray Pl

Ainslie Pl

Heriot Row

Queen Street

Randolph Cres

Queensferry St

To Murrayfield & Corstorphine

Charlotte St

George Street

PRINCE STRE

Shandwick Place

St Cuthbert's Church

The Castle

The Mound

Lothian Road

Princes St

Lawnmarket

Grass Market

West Port

The Vennel

Bruntsfield Links

Edinburgh

Leith Walk
Broughton
Picardy Place
Calton Hill
To Berwick and London
Waterloo Place
Calton Road
New St.
High Street
Canongate
St Mary's St.
Holyrood Palace
Holyrood Road
Drummond St.
Potter Row
Nicholson St.
Pleasance
Here lived John Knox.
L. Irving fecit.

To James & Kyffen
from
an auld Docket
with best wishes to all
Dec 1928

THE ROMANCE OF THE EDINBURGH STREETS

A DOORHEAD IN THE COWGATE

[See page 125

THE ROMANCE OF THE EDINBURGH STREETS

BY

MARY D. STEUART

WITH NINE ILLUSTRATIONS AND TWO MAPS

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Note.—The illustrations are reproduced from photographs by Mr. B. C. Clayton.

THE ROMANCE OF THE EDINBURGH STREETS

CHAPTER I

THE CASTLE

AS the Castle is not only the most prominent object in Edinburgh, but also the reason why Edinburgh ever existed, it is only fitting that at the Castle we should begin this account of some of the varied incidents that go to make up what is vaguely called the "Romance" of a town. At the outset one is faced with two difficulties. In the first place, although the scene of so much of Scotland's history, the Castle has singularly little left of its ancient buildings. The minute chapel of St. Margaret is all that is left of the early work, and the Banqueting Hall and Royal Apartments are the last remains of the mediæval buildings. Argyle's Tower has been much restored, David's Tower, the principal part of the Castle in former days, which still forms part of the arms of the City of Edinburgh, has disappeared, and so has the "Spur," the triangular ravelin, with walls twenty feet thick, which, standing where the Esplanade is now, was the scene of desperate combats in the assaults and sallies that took place in the course of a siege.

In the second place, a detailed history of the Castle would be sufficient in itself for a book, and since the

whole of Edinburgh has to come within the scope of the present volume, a detailed history is obviously impossible. Therefore, true to our title of "Romance," we shall leave structural details to the guide-books, and merely glance at the happenings of centuries in a single chapter, picking out points here and there in order to form a short outline of the doings within its walls.

It may be said that an easterly gale in the year 1070 altered the whole course of Edinburgh's history. Edgar Atheling, the Saxon heir to the English throne, despairing of making any headway against the Norman conquerors, set sail for the Flemish coast with his two sisters, Christina and Margaret, on his way to Hungary, where he hoped to receive shelter and protection from the king, his maternal grandfather. A great storm arose, however, and after beating about for several days, their ship was driven into the Firth of Forth. The travellers landed at North Queensferry, from whence they went to Dunfermline, to beg hospitality from Malcolm Canmore, the son of the Duncan of "Macbeth." The rough unlettered king was completely overwhelmed by the beauty and grace of the fair-haired Saxon princess Margaret who sought his protection. He married her, and, under her influence, made Edinburgh his chief residence, since she had more in common with the Saxons of Lothian and the Merse than with the wild pagan Celts beyond the Forth. Buildings arose around the Castle, including Queen Margaret's own chapel, the one part of the building which has weathered the storms and sieges of eight and a half centuries, and a considerable township sprang up on the sloping ridge below it, for, according to the old chroniclers, she fed three hundred beggars daily, waiting on them herself and washing their feet, as a sign of humility and service.

On November 16, 1093, news of Malcolm's defeat at Alnwick was brought to the Castle, where Queen Margaret lay dying. The situation was precarious; the

king and his eldest son were dead, and Donald Ban, Malcolm's younger brother, the Tanist heir, had seized the opportunity of marching on Edinburgh to kill or put out the eyes of the heirs by primogeniture, according to the custom of the age. In the midst of sorrow and turmoil the Queen died, and then took place the famous escape from the Castle by the postern on the western side, under cover of a thick easterly "haar." Turgot, Bishop of St. Andrews, who tells the tale, had the royal children conveyed safely down the precipitous slope, following himself with the body of the dead Queen, leaving Donald Ban and his Celts to take possession of the empty Castle. In later years Margaret's three younger sons came to the throne one after the other, Edgar, Alexander I, and David I. Only the last-named, the "Sair Sanct for the crown" as James VI called him, is of importance in the history of Edinburgh, for it was during his reign, 1124–53, that Holyrood was founded.

Passing over the reign of Malcolm IV, successor to David I, we come to William the Lion, whose defeat at Alnwick, and subsequent release under the terms of the Treaty of Falaise, by which he swore fealty to Henry II of England, surrendering various castles, including Edinburgh, was productive of so much trouble for his successors. It was in 1174 that the first English garrison took possession of the Castle, and there for twelve years they remained, until it was restored to William as part of the dowry of his bride, Ermengarde de Beaumont, a cousin of the English king. Then came the reign of their son, Alexander II, who founded two of Edinburgh's most famous monasteries, the Black Friars, the memory of which is still recalled by Blackfriars Street, and the Collegiate Church of St. Mary's-in-the-Field, which, standing where the University is to-day, achieved undying notoriety in later years as the "Kirk-o'-Field."

In 1255 a very human and pathetic complaint comes from the Castle. Margaret, the fifteen-year-old daughter of Henry III, had married Alexander III, aged ten, and both of them were shut up in the Castle, more or less prisoners in the hands of certain of the barons, headed by Walter Comyn and John de Baliol, who had never favoured the match. The young Queen had a message taken to her father telling him that she was kept in "a sad and solitary place, without verdure, and, by reason of its vicinity to the sea, unwholesome," adding that she was not permitted "to make excursions through the kingdom," or even to choose her own attendants. Few Scottish royalties can have looked back upon their childhood with any pleasant feelings. However, thanks to armed intervention on the part of Henry III, the juvenile couple were released, and the long reign of Alexander III was destined to be the most prosperous Scotland ever saw.

More than thirty years afterwards, on March 19, 1286, a great storm was raging. Alexander was at Edinburgh Castle, where he had held a council. Margaret had died in 1275, and he had married again quite recently, leaving his bride in Fife while he came to Edinburgh. With all the ardour of a young man he was determined to return to her after supper that very night, and neither the storm nor the advice of his barons would stop him. Out of the Castle he rode, followed by a small escort, while the wind whistled round the foot of the rock, and the clouds were driven headlong across the wild evening sky. It was a fitting prelude to the other storms that were to rage for centuries to come. The Queen was destined never to see her husband, and Edinburgh Castle drawbridge would never again be let down for King Alexander. In the pitch darkness of the stormy night, his horse stumbled as he rode along the top of the cliffs at Kinghorn, and his dead body was found on the shore beneath.

It is needless to relate how Scotland was left without an heir, how Edward I was chosen as arbitrator, how the Castle was handed over to him pending his award, and how the puppet king, Baliol, was chosen. Edward himself spent a couple of nights at the Castle, when putting down the patriot party, and it was probably then that he had a list made of the contents of the Treasury, which were promptly dispatched to England.

In 1314 the English garrison were besieged in the Castle. Fortune's wheel had turned in the direction of Bruce, now that Edward I was dead, and Edinburgh was the only important fortress remaining in English hands. Randolph, Earl of Moray, Bruce's nephew, who conducted the siege, had made several abortive attempts to carry the place; he had also tried to starve the garrison out, but discovered that they were amply provisioned for months to come, and it seemed as if the English leopards might keep the Scottish lion at bay until the crack of doom. Among Randolph's men was one William Frank, who had known every inch of the Castle in former days, and had been in the habit of paying secret visits, after the gates were shut, to a woman in the town. His way had been down the face of the rock, on the north side according to some historians, on the south according to others, the latter being more probable, since it would have taken him down to the Grassmarket, where his inamorata is said to have lived. He volunteered to lead the way up the cliff, taking with him a few picked men to overpower the sentries, and open the gates to the main body.

It was March 14, a dark, windy night not unlike that other March night, twenty-eight years earlier, when Alexander III had clattered cheerfully down the West Bow, and out of the town on his way to Queensferry and Fife. Frank led the way, Randolph followed close at his heels, and behind them came the thirty men who were chosen for the desperate attempt. A stone dis-

lodged or a sword clanging against the rock would have betrayed them at once, though they were helped by the noise of the storm and the carelessness of the guard. At last they reached the rampart wall, and there crouched silently as the sentry passed on his rounds a few yards above them. Suddenly he stopped and, with a shout of " Away with you—I see you well ! " he sent a stone clattering down the precipice close to the Scots beneath him. It was a bad moment for the little band of invaders, but, strange to say, nothing further happened. Whether the sentry fell a victim to a sudden attack of nerves, or whether he was playing a trick on another man, no one ever knew or wished to know. He passed on, and in a few minutes the Scots had scaled the ramparts, shouted their war-cry, and fallen upon the surprised garrison, who, after fighting fiercely, were overpowered by their unknown opponents, who seemed to have dropped from the midnight sky.

Down came the St. George and up went the Lion of Scotland once more, but afterwards, in accordance with Bruce's wise policy of hearing " the lark sing " rather than " the mouse squeak," it was dismantled and lay in ruins. In 1335 Edinburgh was again occupied by the English, and the ruined Castle was repaired and fortified once more. It was just after the repairs were completed in 1337 that Robert Prendergast killed Edward III's Marshal and fled for sanctuary to Holyrood (*see* Chapter VII).

The next triumph of the Scots was in 1341, and this time the Castle was won, not by a perilous ascent of the rock, but by a clever trick. The honours in this case belong to a priest, William Bullock by name, and Sir William Douglas, the famous Knight of Liddesdale. One day in April, the Governor, Sir Richard de Limoisin, was told that an English sailor was waiting at the gate, humbly desirous of speech with him. He was admitted, and sharply questioned by the Governor;

but his answers, his accent, and the cut of his clothes were all convincingly English. The business upon which he had come was pleasant. Being master of a trading vessel, he had arrived at the Port of Leith with a cargo of provisions and Rhenish wine, which he thought the English garrison might like to buy. The English garrison was only too willing to do so, since local food supplies were neither good nor plentiful. Negotiations were soon concluded, and the captain was to begin delivering the goods next day. In due course a long trail of sumpter mules laden with boxes and barrels toiled wearily up the High Street, escorted by a dozen English seamen wearing their peaked hoods drawn over their heads. Among those who watched the progress of the train were certain men, who, having come into the town by twos and threes, unnoticed by the English garrison, the previous evening, were lying hidden in the tumbledown houses round about the Castle Hill.

Arrived at the gates, where the portcullis was raised and the drawbridge lowered in readiness for them, the panting mules were halted. Suddenly the ropes that bound barrels and boxes to the saddles gave way, the mules began to kick, and in the wild confusion that followed, the captain and his men, pushing back their hoods, shouted the famous cry, " A Douglas ! A Douglas ! " and threw themselves, sword in hand, upon the guards. At this the men secreted in the houses below, followers of the Knight of Liddesdale, dashed up to the assistance of the twelve sailors (disguised Scots, every one of them), and their captain, who was none other than the adroit priest, Bullock. A short sharp fight took place, but as had happened five-and-twenty years before, the English were worsted, and Sir Richard de Limoisin, instead of feasting on Rhenish wine and good fresh meat and vegetables, found himself conducted, a prisoner, to one of his own dungeons.

During the following century, David II, the unworthy

son of the great Bruce, built "David's Tower," so familiar in old engravings of the Castle; Robert II and Robert III held occasional councils in the Castle, or received French ambassadors there; Henry IV and Hotspur laid siege to it, but had to withdraw and return to England; James I returned to Scotland after his long captivity, and in the year 1437 left his six-year-old son Prince James in Edinburgh Castle, while he, the Queen and the Court went to spend Christmas at the Black Friars Monastery at Perth. The sequel—the King's murder—is too well known to need more than a passing mention; but the result, so far as the Castle was concerned, was that young James II became virtually a prisoner there, in the hands of Sir William Creichton, the Chancellor, while the Queen-Mother, Joan of Beaufort, remained powerless at Stirling.

But the Queen was a woman of resource. She appeared at the Castle one day accompanied by her ladies, and, obtaining an interview with Creichton, begged him to let her spend a few days with her son. Charm succeeding where both force and subtlety would have failed, her request was granted, and the feminine element brought within the walls by a group of very attractive women was by no means unpleasant. The Queen would on no account outstay her welcome, and at the end of a few days she announced that, being entirely satisfied as regards the young King's welfare, she would now take leave of him. She had one last request to make, however. A quantity of the rich dresses she had worn before her widowhood were stored in the Castle, and as she intended to present them to the White Kirk of Brechin, whither she was going on a pilgrimage, she would be deeply indebted to the Chancellor if he would permit her to take them away in two great "arks" or coffers. Creichton was delighted to grant such a reasonable request, and ordered extra mules to take them down to Leith. The party set off early one summer morning.

After pleasant leave-taking with the Chancellor at the Castle gates, they took ship at Leith, and once at sea, hastily opened one of the "arks," out of which got the young King, delighted at the prospect of freedom and a change of surroundings at Stirling. It must have been at much the same time that Creichton, in the Castle, found that his master and prisoner, the key to all his power, had been abducted from under his very nose. His opinion on visitors, dresses and pilgrimages have been left, perhaps wisely, unrecorded by the chronicler!

On November 24, 1440, Creichton comes to the fore again in the Castle, on the occasion of the murder of the young Earl of Douglas and his brother. It is needless to go into the well-known details of how they came under a safe-conduct, how, when going into the Castle for the banquet at which the young King was present, their followers were all left outside the gates, how the black bull's head, the symbol of death, was placed upon the board, and how the two Douglases were overpowered and dragged out to execution in spite of the entreaties of the King. What was thought about it at the time is expressed in the old ballad:

> "Edinburgh Castle, toune and toure,
> God grant thou sink for sinne!
> And that even for the black dinoir
> Erl Douglas gat therein."

In 1479, James III, who had succeeded his father James II in 1460, at the age of nine, arrested his two brothers, Alexander, Duke of Albany, and John, Earl of Mar, on a charge of plotting against the Crown. Mar, who had been sent to Craigmillar, died suddenly, and at once the rumour arose that he had been murdered. As the rumour might well be true, Albany, who was shut up in Edinburgh Castle, on the north side on David's Tower above the precipice, planned and carried out a daring escape. Royal prisoners were allowed to

supplement their fare when they could, so when Albany asked permission to buy a couple of casks of malvoisie wine from a ship that had just come to Leith, it was readily granted, and the casks were sent unexamined to his apartment. Friends were on board the vessel, and had put into one of the casks, not only malvoisie, but a coil of rope, and a letter wrapped up in waxed cloth, urging him to escape at once, for " the king's minions had resolved that he should die ere the morrow's sun had set." As no time was to be lost, he confided his plans to his " chalmer-chield," the page who was allowed to share his captivity and wait upon him. This boy was sent to the captain of the guard with an invitation to come to the Duke's room with three of his men that evening, to sup with him and sample the wine.

The invitation was accepted, and the guests were well plied with the wine until they were thoroughly drowsy, and it was late enough for all the garrison except the sentries to be asleep. Then, springing to his feet, Albany seized the captain's dagger, stabbed him to the heart, and, turning on the other three bewildered men, dispatched them in the same way. Not content with that, he took the bodies, and, with the barbarity of a savage, flung them on to the great open fire that was burning at one end of the room, " and there in their armour they broiled and sweltered like tortoises in iron shells." Locking the door of this slaughter-house behind him, the Duke and his page reached the ramparts unseen. To fix the rope was a matter of a moment, and the page lowered himself over the cliff. Unluckily it was too short, and when still some way from the bottom he fell, and lay helpless on the ground with a broken thigh. Albany's wits never failed him. Realizing what had happened, he hurried back to his room again, took the sheets from his bed, and, adding them to the rope, got down in safety. Then, with a devotion in strange contrast to his brutality just before, he picked up the

chalmer-chield and carried him the whole two miles down to Leith, risking delay and detection rather than leave him to the mercy of the garrison. Next morning, when the rope and sheets were discovered, as well as the horrible sight in the prisoner's room, Albany and the page were both well away from Leith, and beyond pursuit.

Ere long he returned and imprisoned James himself in the Castle, from which he was only delivered at the intervention of Edward IV, who sent the Duke of Gloucester, afterwards Richard III, to arrange matters.

In the next reign the Castle saw pleasanter sights than the earlier part of its history afforded it. James IV, who loved joustings and all "knightly exercises," often held tournaments on the level ground beneath the Castle on the south side, where King's Stables Road enters the Grassmarket. The Queen and the Court ladies watched them from decorated stands on the walls, and there James would join them, if he were not taking part in the proceedings himself, while between the events fiddlers and harpers amused the onlookers with music.

A large part of the troublous minority of James V was passed here in the guardianship, or rather as the prisoner, of whatever faction happened to be in power. On the whole, he fared better than his youthful predecessors, for he had the famous Gavin Dunbar, afterwards Bishop of Glasgow, for his tutor, and was provided with a little mule, on which he rode out, escorted by guards. Let us hope he liked his quarters better than Dunbar, who described himself as situated on "the windy and richt unpleasant castell and royk of Edinburgh."

In 1544 Edinburgh was sacked and burned by Hertford, but though he had instructions to "beat down and overthrow the Castle," it was so ably defended that he was forced to retreat, leaving smoking ruins in place of the town, and a wasted country for miles round.

On a spring day in 1569 Mary of Guise came here to die. The Reformers were in arms, with English troops to help them. The Queen Regent's French forces, from whom she had hoped so much, had been beaten back within the defences of Leith, and the fall of that port was evidently only a matter of time. Ill though she was with dropsy, she still went daily to the top of David's Tower, where she could see the two armies, but ere long her strength failed her, and she took to her bed. Then it was that she sent for John Knox's friend, Willox, and the chiefs of the reforming party, for that pathetic interview at which Ruthven and Lethington were present. She begged them to seek only the good of the country, not caring for their own ends, implored them to be true and loyal servants of the young Queen Mary, and, asking their forgiveness for whatever offence she had caused them, she solemnly embraced each one of her enemies among the Lords of the Congregation, " giving her hand to persons of lower degree, bidding them all farewell, with gentle words and looks full of sweetness." Soon after this last meeting, which left none of those present unmoved, she became unconscious, and died on June 11, 1560, leaving the stage set for the forthcoming tragedy of her daughter.

The next great event in the Castle's history was the birth of Prince James on June 19, 1566. The Royal apartments had been fitted up with great magnificence. Turkey carpets covered the floor ; chairs with gilded leather backs were brought in ; rich hangings draped the walls, and every outward sign betokened prosperity. The Queen and Darnley had been reconciled, and Rizzio's murder was to be forgotten. There was great rejoicing throughout the Castle and the town, and a " household " was promptly provided for the infant prince. Lady Mar was made his governess ; Mrs. Margaret Little, wife of Alexander Gray, burgess of Edinburgh, was his head nurse, with four or five women under her. Five ladies

of gentle birth were appointed " rockers " of his cradle. A master cook and foreman were provided for him with servants for his pantry, his wine cellar and his ale cellar. Three " chalmer-chields," a " furnisher of coals," a confectioner, and five " violers " or musicians, completed the attendants required by the new-born child.

With the remainder of Mary's life in Scotland the Castle has little to do, and we can pass on to the great siege which lasted from 1570 to 1573, when the " Queen's men " under Kirkaldy of Grange, held the Castle against the " King's men " under Mar and Morton. Kirkaldy, as brave a soldier as any in Europe, had made ample preparations for the siege by raising troops among those who still remained loyal to Mary, and seizing all provisions brought into Leith. Months passed, a year, then two years, and still the Castle held out. The Regent Mar died in 1572, and the Regent Morton succeeded him, but the King's men seemed no nearer their object. At last a truce was made in October, 1572, to last until January 1, 1573, and the townsfolk had a little respite from the cannonading. At six o'clock on the morning of January 1, it began again, Kirkaldy first firing one shot as a signal to good citizens to take cover, and so the weary business went on. The English envoy, Henry Killigrew, appeared in March, ostensibly to try to arrange peace, but with the ulterior motive of doing a little spying on behalf of Queen Elizabeth, to whom Morton had appealed for help. After Killigrew came Sir William Drury, the Governor of Berwick, but neither the one nor the other could bring the two parties one inch nearer peace than before. At last Elizabeth decided to move definitely in James's favour. Drury returned to Edinburgh with 1,500 men and a number of guns far bigger than any that Morton possessed. By May 15 five batteries were in position, one on the high ground where Heriot's Hospital stands to-day, one near what is now the Lothian Road, two in the neighbourhood of St.

Cuthbert's Church, and one on the ground now covered by Princes Street, opposite David's Tower.

On Sunday, May 17, all the guns were fired simultaneously, at a given signal, and Kirkaldy must have seen that the end was near. On the 23rd the Princes Street guns, which had pounded David's Tower for six days on end, were at last successful. With a terrific crash the huge mass of masonry came thundering down, men and guns with it, over the edge of the rock and into the Nor' Loch, 200 feet below. The next day the Gate Tower and Wallace's Tower came down, and the Castle guns were mostly silent, though the arquebusiers fought on bravely. Then the old square keep of Bruce's day and the Constable's Tower next it, fell in ruins. But still the garrison fought on. The next disaster was the capture of the Spur, the famous outwork covering half of what is now the Esplanade, and containing the chief water supply of the Castle. The end had come at last—the weary men could hold out no longer. On the 28th Kirkaldy asked for a parley, and was lowered over the walls to arrange conditions, but Morton would hear of no conditions. Absolute unconditional surrender was what he demanded, and he got it on the following day. The remnant of the garrison marched out on the 29th—Kirkaldy (who was hanged as a traitor at the Market Cross) Lethington (who only escaped the same fate by dying either of illness or poison) Lord Home, several ladies, including the Countess of Argyle, twelve knights, one hundred men, and ten boys. So ended the Great Siege.

For some time after this there was peace. The ruins were cleared away, and the " half-moon battery " rose up on the site of David's Tower. Morton was arrested, conducted to the Castle as a prisoner in 1580, and, like Kirkaldy before him, was executed at the Market Cross.

In later years Charles I spent one night in the Royal Apartments in 1633, before going in procession to his

coronation at Holyrood. In 1639 Sir Alexander Leslie, an officer who had learnt the art of war under Gustavus Adolphus, took the Castle for the Covenanters almost without a blow. Forcing the barrier gate with a petard, his men rushed through the Spur and speedily broke down the second gate, whereupon the Governor surrendered, and Leslie gave a dinner in the Banqueting Hall to the Covenanting leaders, of whom Montrose was one.

The following year, 1640, a temporary peace was patched up, and in February the Castle was restored to the King, who installed Sir Patrick Ruthven as Governor. By June the peace was broken, and Leslie sent Montrose with a white flag to call upon Ruthven to surrender. On his refusal another siege began, but under very different circumstances to the last. Provisions were short, no preparations had been made, and on September 18 of that same year Ruthven capitulated, after losing two hundred of his men by disease. They marched out with the honours of war, he, and his seventy remaining men, passing down the High Street on their way to Leith with flag flying, their one drum beating, and their two cannon with portfires burning. Six hundred of Leslie's men accompanied them as a protection from the mob, since they were little able to protect themselves, for Ruthven is described as being "spoiled with scurvy, his legs swelled, and many of his teeth fallen out," and his men were in no better plight.

In the years that followed some petty fighting went on round the Castle; Cromwell was feasted in the Banqueting Hall on one occasion, Monk on another. A thunderous salute hailed the Restoration, and, with the turning of the tables, Argyle found himself in prison, there awaiting execution. In 1681 another Earl of Argyle, the son of "Gillespie Grumach," occupied the State Prison, condemned to death for "treason and

leasing telling," in other words, for refusing to take the Test. He dispatched a messenger to Charles II begging for a reprieve, but his enemies, among them the son of Montrose, replied to that move by hastening the day of execution. At six in the evening, on December 20, he was told that at noon the next day he would be removed to the common prison, preparatory to his last journey to the scaffold. His daughter-in-law, Lady Sophia Lindsay of Balcarres, had other ideas, however! Later in the evening she drove up to the Castle in her coach, and, stopping at the outer gate, picked her way daintily through the mud and slush, with a footman behind her holding up her train. On hearing that she had come to take a last farewell of Argyle, the officer of the guard gave orders at once that she was to be admitted. For half an hour she was closeted with her father-in-law in the little room over the portcullis gate, which still exists, though much restored, then, the painful interview over, she passed down the stairs followed by the lackey. It was a dark night, snow was falling, and the ground was deep in slush. As she passed the sentry, he gave a sharp look at the lackey, and laid a hand on his arm as if to draw him nearer the light of his lantern. The man started at the touch, hesitated, and dropped Lady Sophia's train into the mud. Forgetting all her grief in anger at his carelessness, she snatched up the end of her train and struck him full across the face with it, exclaiming, " Take that, thou careless loon! " At that the sentry burst out laughing and let the lackey, whose face was all covered in mud, pass on and put the lady into her coach. Off they drove into the darkness, and a few hours later, when the alarm was given that the Earl had escaped and only a footman was left in his cell, the sentry realized what a chance he had missed. Argyle got safely away to Holland, and Lady Sophia, after a short imprisonment in the Tolbooth, was released and pardoned.

But he was fated to die on the scaffold. Four years later he was back in the same prison again, condemned to death for rebellion against King James. No escape was possible on this occasion, but the Earl triumphed in death as he had never triumphed in life. Every one knows the familiar story of "The Last Sleep of Argyle"—of the Privy Councillor who went to look at his victim on the last day of his life, and found him, heavily ironed as he was, peacefully asleep. Macaulay says, "The conscience of the renegade smote him, he turned sick at heart, ran out of the Castle, and took refuge in the house of a lady who lived hard by. There he flung himself on a couch, and gave himself up to an agony of remorse and shame. His kinswoman, alarmed at his looks and groans, thought he had been taken with sudden illness, and begged him to drink a cup of sack. 'No, no,' said he, 'it will do me no good.' She prayed him to tell what had disturbed him. 'I have been,' he said, 'in Argyle's prison. I have seen him within an hour of eternity sleeping as sweetly as ever man did. But as for *me*——!'"

Once more we pass quickly over the events of many years. When William of Orange landed, and the Convention met in Edinburgh under the Duke of Hamilton, Claverhouse did his best to win back the assembled nobles to King James, but failing completely in that, and finding himself in the greatest danger, he made his masterly exit from the city with his men. The Duke of Gordon, then holding the Castle for the King, seeing Claverhouse's troops marching along the Lang Dykes, (now Princes Street), signalled to their leader, who wheeled round at St. Cuthbert's Church, and scrambled up the steep western side of the Castle rock, encumbered with armour as he was, to give final advice to the Duke at the little postern which can still be seen in the wall overlooking St. Cuthbert's. Gordon was to hold the Castle until he (Claverhouse) returned victorious from

the west. As all the world knows, he never did return, but met his death at Killiecrankie in the moment of victory, and Gordon surrendered on June 13, 1689, having held out until the garrison was reduced to fifty, their ammunition spent, and their food had dwindled down to dry bread and salted herrings eaten raw. It was after this last siege that repairs were made that gave the Castle very much the aspect it has to-day.

In 1707 the last act of what the Scotch considered their national tragedy was played. The Regalia, the crown, sword of state, sceptre, and Treasurer's rod of office, were packed away in a great oak chest, secured by three locks, and placed in the crown-room, there to lie in dust and oblivion for a hundred and ten years.

After the rebellions of '15 and '45 the prison cells were filled with captive rebels, ladies as well as men, some of whom were most harshly treated. Many of them lingered on in prison for years, and few were as lucky as Lady Ogilvie, who walked out disguised as a laundress, or James Mohr Macgregor, the worthless son of the redoubtable Rob Roy, whose daughter came to his cell one day, disguised as a lame, bent cobbler, and, changing clothes with her father, took his place, while he, muffled in a tattered greatcoat, his face half concealed by a dirty old red nightcap, shuffled past the sentries, out of the town, and over the seas to France.

The history of the Castle is nearly told now. Passing over its use as an internment camp for French prisoners during the Napoleonic wars, we come on to 1817, the year that saw the opening up of the crown-room and the unpacking of the Regalia. It was long since the Honours of Scotland had been seen by the people at the last Riding of Parliament, and there was more than a suspicion that they had been carried off to England, stolen by the Union Commissioners, or sold to defray the cost of bribes at that time. Owing to Scott's influence, permission was obtained from the Prince

Regent to open the sealed room and investigate the contents of the great chest. Of those present at the opening, it was Sir Walter who felt the " thrill " (to use an entirely unsuitable modern expression) most deeply. In the course of a century the keys had been lost and workmen were got in to force the lock. The old chest, thick with dust, resounded hollowly to the blows of a hammer. Even Scott began to waver in his belief that the Regalia was there. It was a long and slow piece of work, but at last it was finished, and the lid was lifted. The first thing that met the eye was a linen cloth, and underneath the cloth lay the Regalia of Scotland ; the crown, first used, so it is said, at the Bruce's coronation, the sceptre surmounted by a crystal globe, to which magic powers were ascribed in former days, the great sword of state presented to James IV by Pope Julius II, and the Lord High Treasurer's Mace of Office.

A deep sigh of relief arose from all present, and a minute later the royal standard was fluttering on the flagstaff, while a shot from the battery announced to the whole town that all was well. The following day, February 6, 1817, Scott and his fellow-Commissioners returned to the Castle, bringing their families to see the restored treasures. One of the men, of a sportive disposition, seized the crown and was about to place it, with mock ceremony, upon the head of one of the ladies. A sudden " By God, no ! " arrested his hand. The whole party stared at Scott, for it was he who had spoken, and there was such a tone of deep anger, horror, and suppressed emotion in his voice, as none of them had ever heard before. In the awkward silence that followed, the Commissioner, very red in the face, put the crown down. Scott, recovering himself, whispered to him hastily, " Pray forgive me," and, noticing that his daughter Sophia, who was present, looked white and faint, went out with her into the open air. She told

Lockhart afterwards that he never spoke a word as they walked down the Mound together on their way back to Castle Street, but she felt his arm shake every now and then, so intense was his feeling for the long-buried " Honours."

CHAPTER II

THE CASTLE HILL AND LAWNMARKET

BEFORE considering any of the many details in the history of the "Royal Mile" formed by the Castle Hill, Lawnmarket, High Street and Canongate, it is worth while pausing a moment to try to realize that this was the scene of two-thirds of Scotland's history. Whatever happened in Edinburgh, down to the end of the eighteenth century, was almost bound to happen in this street. When, in the autumn of 1093, Prince Edgar, weary, muddy, and heavy-hearted, emerged from the woods surrounding the keep and collection of huts that represented Edinburgh, to break the news of the lost battle of Alnwick, and the death of Malcolm Canmore, to Queen Margaret, it must have been by a path up the sloping ridge (now the High Street) that he rode.

When her son David I, the "Sair Sanct," rode forth to hunt on Holy Cross Day, September 14, in defiance of clerical censure, and saw a miraculous vision in consequence, it was by way of the High Street that he and his train went out.

When the monks of St. Giles, of the Blackfriars, or the Greyfriars, went in procession bearing sacred effigies and relics through the town, it was up or down this same street that their route lay. When kings entered their capital, when malefactors went to execution, when the great families of Douglas and Hamilton fell to fighting each other, when mobs arose at the Reformation,

when the Castle was besieged, when merchants did peaceful business at the Market Cross, when servants gossiped at the wells, and their mistresses went out shopping, when the lords attended Parliament and the Town Council their Council Room, the Royal Mile was the scene of it all.

There was this one long street, lined on either side with towering "lands," from which closes and wynds, leading to more tall houses, ran down the slope on either side of the ridge. There was the old Nor' Loch (now Princes Street Gardens) on one side, and the Cowgate on the other. That was Edinburgh for many generations, until prosperity came to Scotland hidden in the tragedy of the '45 and Culloden.

With this in mind, we will begin a very leisurely progress towards Holyrood, touching on the history of some of the houses and closes as we go.

The first building on the south side is Cannon Ball House, which owes its name to the ball, still embedded in the stonework, on the side overlooking the steps, a relic of the siege of the Castle in 1745, and the last of the many occasions upon which the Castle guns fired on the town.

On the opposite side of the street is Ramsay Lane, leading into the picturesque modern courtyard of Ramsay Garden. In 1743 Allan Ramsay the elder built himself a house on this sloping hillside, as a place to retire to in his old age. Although much changed in appearance, the house, Ramsay Lodge, still exists as a students' hostel on the north side of the courtyard. The second Allan Ramsay, the painter, enlarged it somewhat when he inherited it on his father's death in 1758, and also built the small houses to the east of it, which now form one side of the entrance to the courtyard. Various people of note have occupied Ramsay Lodge. Mrs. Grant of Laggan, well known in her day as a writer and something of a blue-stocking as well,

lived here at one time. Scott's genial friend Sir Adam Ferguson had it at another, and the list is closed by John Galt, who wrote the greater part of the "Annals of a Parish" here.

Returning to the Castle Hill again, we find Sempil's Close a little beyond Ramsay Lane, with the old house of the Sempils at the end of it, just visible above the door that closes in the passage. Lower down still, where the West Bow (of which only the name is old) turns sharply to the south, we come to the ancient Lawnmarket, teeming, like the whole of the Royal Mile, with historical incident and association.

In the year 1477 Parliament ordained "all cottone, claith, white, grey, and all uther claith . . . all lynning claith to be sold there [the Lawnmarket] and in na uther place." Not only cloth and linen but all "butter, cheise, wool and sichlike gudis thet suld be weyit [weighed] to be usit at the Overbow and a trone [weighing machine] set there, and not to be opennyt quhil the houre of nyne forownoone." Here then is the origin of the name, and for more than three centuries the traveller who reached Edinburgh by way of the West Port, rode up the West Bow, and had to fairly pick his way between the stalls and canvas-covered booths of the "lawn-merchants," who displayed their bales of cloth and webs of linen freely to all comers, until a sudden shower of rain sent them to shelter their stock as best they could.

The hand of improving Town Councils was laid heavily upon the Old Town during the latter half of last century, but even so, many of the houses have seen much history pass beneath their windows. On the north side, Mylne's Court, with the date 1690 over the entrance, is the first to strike the eye. This must have been the earliest attempt at town "planning" apart from town "building" that Edinburgh saw. The King's master-mason, Robert Mylne, the seventh of his family to enjoy that

title, had the happy idea of designing an open square, which should admit both light and air, elements that the haphazard jumble of buildings in the narrow closes almost entirely eliminated. This " Court " is the result, and at the time of its erection was one of the most fashionable parts of the town.

Then comes James's Court, which has been much altered and modernized, owing to a great fire and the rebuilding which followed it, but which still recalls various memories of past days. In the eighteenth century, it was one of the most fashionable parts of Edinburgh. The inhabitants kept a clerk to record their names and proceedings, they had balls and assemblies to which only they and a strictly limited number of guests were asked, and (this must have seemed the very height of vulgar snobbishness to their old-fashioned neighbours) they kept their own private scavenger to clean the court and remove all the refuse created by an entire absence of drainage. Among the names of occupants are the Earl of Aberdeen, Ilay Campbell, afterwards Lord President of the Court of Session, Sir John Clerk of Pennycuik, Lord Prestongrange (so familiar to Stevenson's readers), Lord Bankton, Dr. Gregory, David Hume, and James Boswell, Esq., younger of Auchinleck.

Here it was that " on Saturday, the 14th of August 1773, late in the evening," Mr. Boswell received a note from Dr. Johnson, announcing the latter's arrival at Boyds Inn in the Canongate. Hurrying off to the inn at once he found the great man somewhat out of humour with a waiter who had put sugar into his lemonade with his very dirty fingers, and bore him off up the High Street to James's Court. " My wife had tea ready for him," says Boswell, " and we sat chatting till nearly two in the morning." On the whole, a visit from Dr. Johnson, though honourable, was not a wholly unmixed joy, especially to Mrs. Boswell, who was utterly disgusted

by his appearance and manners, and was up in arms in the cause of her native country, which certainly did fare rather badly at the doctor's hands. But nothing shook her husband's faith in his idol, and he even added an extra £500 to the portion of his baby daughter Veronica, because she was not frightened at the sight of Johnson's strange, uncouth visage and movements.

On the south side of the street, is the modernized West Bow, which was formerly the chief access to the West Port and Grassmarket, but its history belongs to another chapter, and we will pass on to Riddell's Court, which, though much restored, gives a very good idea of what an Edinburgh Court really looked like in bygone days. On entering the outer court, nearest the Lawnmarket, one sees a doorway with the date 1726 above it. In 1751 the good-natured countenance and heavy, pendulous cheeks of David Hume might have been seen emerging from the obscurity of the old entry. This was his first Edinburgh home, and from here he wrote to his friend Adam Smith, of "Wealth of Nations" fame—"Direct to me in Riddell's Land, Lawnmarket . . . I have now, at last, being turned forty, to my own honour, to that of learning, and to that of the present age arrived at the dignity of being a householder! About seven months ago I got a house of my own, and completed a regular family consisting of a head—myself—and two inferior members, a maid and a cat. My sister has just joined me and keeps me company. With frugality, I can reach, I find, cleanliness, warmth, light, plenty and contentment." It was in this house that Hume penned the first pages of his "History of England," which raised such a storm of applause from his philosophic friends and such a storm of indignation from his clerical enemies, though both storms, so far as most of us are concerned, now lie smothered in the accumulated dust of the top shelf of the bookcase.

Passing under the arch into the inner courtyard, we see before us Baillie Macmorran's house, a quaint building of irregular outline, with gargoyles, dormer windows and heavy old-fashioned shutters. Baillie Macmorran was a great man in his day, the latter half of the sixteenth century, a man rather after the type of George Heriot, of wealthy burgess rank, with whom James VI found more in common than with his dour and difficult nobles. In this house he entertained both King and Queen " with great solemnity and merriness " ; but his memory is kept green by his tragic death, rather than by his very comfortable and prosperous life. On September 15, 1595, there was a riot at the High School, which had long been under the control of the Town Council. The boys claimed a week's holiday. It was refused : whereupon they, being chiefly " gentilmanes' bairnes," armed themselves with swords and pistols, took possession of the school by night, and prepared to stand a siege in defence of their principles—that being the true spirit of the age. The Town Council called upon them to surrender, and even offered to come to terms, but all to no effect. The boys had done their work of barricading the doors most efficiently, and were evidently enjoying themselves greatly.

Then the Town Council, after much discussion, sent a posse of city officers, with Macmorran at their head, to break in the door with a heavy beam used as a battering-ram. The Baillie had risen to his present position from a humble beginning as house-servant to the Regent Morton, and his appearance was greeted by the " gentilmanes' bairnes " with derisive shouts of " buttery carle," which roused the attacking force to fury. In a few moments the door would have been burst in, when suddenly there was a pistol shot from one of the windows, and down fell the unfortunate Baillie with a bullet through the head. The boys, panic-stricken at the result of their exploit, surrendered at once, and Sinclair,

who fired the shot, and several others, were at once imprisoned. Macmorran's family clamoured for an "eye for an eye." The nobles swore that if any of the lads were injured, the people of Edinburgh would rue it. Finally, Lord Sinclair, head of the family to which the boy belonged, requested the King's intercession. Poor King Jamie, whose affections lay nearer the burgesses than the nobility, was turned now one way, now another, until, at last, he addressed the magistrates personally on the subject, and had the culprits set free. The Baillie's family cried for vengeance in vain, the interest soon died down, and now only the house in Riddell's Court remains to revive memories of old times and an old story.

Next to Riddell's Court comes Fisher's Close, a quaint, narrow passage, where, in these days, the sign of the three balls is the most prominent object, but where, in the eighteenth century, the Dukes of Buccleuch had their town residence. The house itself was pulled down to make way for Victoria Terrace, which now terminates the passage, but the general aspect of the close remains much as it was.

In Brodie's Close we are face to face with one of the strangest tales in the domestic history of Edinburgh. This was the abode of the famous Deacon Brodie, whose story is too extraordinary to be passed over shortly. Could you have visited the Lawnmarket somewhere about the year 1786, you would very probably have noticed a neat figure in a black tail coat and knee breeches, with a highly respectable hat and cane, coming out of Brodie's Close. Any passer-by would have told you that that was Deacon Brodie the Town Councillor, and Deacon of Incorporated Trades, who kept a wright's shop, employed several journeymen, and was looked upon as one of the most substantial and useful citizens in the town. And yet that same night, if you were lodging in one of the windswept old "lands," you might

have met him again, well disguised, with shabby clothes and mask, creeping stealthily up the old turnpike stair carrying a dark lantern and skeleton keys (they now repose in the Museum of Antiquities), bent upon robbing a man with whom he had been supping, perhaps, only an hour or two before.

The fact of the matter was that the Deacon was well-nigh "broke." In spite of the very convincing black suit and cane, he loved a jovial evening at the "Cape Club" in Craig's Close, or with far less reputable companions at James Clarke's Tavern, at the head of Fleshmarket Close, or at the cockpit in the Grassmarket. Cards, dice and game-cocks all held out an unholy attraction for him. These amusements and the keep of two mistresses were his ruin. Burgling was comparatively easy for a man in his position, who, if careful in his arrangements, was never likely to be suspected, and, moreover, it appealed to a certain grim sense of humour he possessed. He would advise a neighbour as to a new bolt for his door, as a safeguard against the very burglary he, the Deacon, intended to commit. On the Town Council he gravely consulted with his fellows upon the advisability of offering a reward for his own capture. After robbing a friend's house he would offer him warm sympathy next day, and, in fact, Deacon Brodie led his double life so successfully that not a soul suspected him until after the last fatal affair at Chessell's Court.*

By 1788 he had entered into partnership with three other men, George Smith, an English hawker who had been a locksmith, and was therefore a most useful man to the Deacon, John Brown, who, sentenced to transportation for card-sharping, had managed to escape, and Ainslie, an Edinburgh ne'er-do-well. These four worthies planned a grand coup in the shape of a robbery of the Excise Office in Chessell's Court. The Deacon laid the foundations of the scheme by going to the Office

* See page 79.

to inquire for a certain Mr. Corbett of Stirling, who often came to Edinburgh on Excise business, and while he kept the cashier in conversation, Smith took a putty impression of the key of the outer door, which, according to the usual custom, hung on a nail just inside. Then, having found out that the last of the clerks left about 8 o'clock in the evening, and the night-watchman did not come on duty till 10, all seemed in train for a most successful piece of work.

The evening of Wednesday, March 5, 1788, was fixed for the enterprise. Ainslie was to remain in the court-yard with a whistle, to give the alarm if necessary. The Deacon, having opened the door with his false key, was to stand on guard in the hall, while Smith and Brown were to break open the door of the cashier's room and rifle his desk. All went well, and the three men got in with ease. Unluckily for them, however, Mr. Bonar, Deputy-Solicitor of Excise, wanted some papers, and returned to the office about 8.30 to get them. He found the outer door open, but took no notice, thinking one of the clerks must be staying late. Brodie, who was in the hall when this unknown man came in, imagined they were discovered, lost his head at once, brushed past the intruder, and took to his heels. Ainslie did likewise. Mr. Bonar, still thinking no evil, went to his room, got his papers, and went out again, slamming the door behind him.

Meanwhile Brown and Smith were having a disappointing time, for all they found in the desk was about £16, though, had they known it, £600 lay in a secret drawer close to hand. While they were still searching they heard the door bang, and, hurrying downstairs, found the Deacon had gone. They went outside, and Ainslie had vanished also. Not knowing what had happened, they too took to flight, and only heard the whole story on Friday, the 7th, when the confederates met to divide their very inadequate spoil of £16. Brown, as soon as

he had got his share, left the others. He had been thinking, and his thoughts amounted to this. In the first place the whole town was in a ferment over this new outrage, coming, as it did, on top of so many others. In the second, his previous sentence to transportation still hung over his head, and it would go hard with him if he were caught. In the third, a reward of £150 was offered to any person who would disclose the names of the thieves engaged in the robbery at Inglis and Horner's shop in Bridge Street, one of their previous "jobs," and in the fourth he was furious with Brodie and Ainslie for having left him in the lurch in the Excise Office. The result of his meditation was that he went straight to the Sheriff-Clerk's office and told the whole story, only leaving out the Deacon's name, with a view, probably, to profitable blackmail later on.

On the 8th Smith and Ainslie were clapped into the Tolbooth. The news came like a bolt from the blue upon Brodie, who had no idea how much was known. Like a bold man he decided to go and find out, so, taking his cocked hat and his cane, he went to the Tolbooth, congratulated the officials on the capture they had made and said he would like to see these two notorious criminals. Luck was against him still. Strict orders had been given that no one was to see the prisoners, and the Deacon went home no wiser than he had come out. After a night of horrible doubt and indecision he decided to fly the country. Taking advantage of the morning service hour, he slipped quietly out of the town on Sunday, the 9th, and was soon on his way south.

A fortnight later, a Mid-Calder tobacconist and his wife, travelling by sea from London to Leith, had a certain Mr. Dixon as fellow-passenger for part of the way. He was a man of some importance, as the captain was going to take him across to Ostend before making for Leith. Mr. Dixon was most pleasant, and hearing

that Mr. Geddes, the tobacconist, was going to pass through Edinburgh he begged him to deliver one or two letters to friends there. In landing at Leith, the first thing that caught Mr. Geddes's eye was a description of the missing William Brodie, which tallied exactly with the Mr. Dixon they had left at Ostend. Mr. Geddes hesitated some time, then gave the information and the letters to the Sheriff. On July 7 the Deacon returned to his native town in handcuffs. Brodie's Close knew him no more. He was lodged, a stone's-throw away, in the Tolbooth, and there, on the platform outside, he and Smith were executed on October 1.

Nearly opposite Brodie's Close, on the north side of the street, is a fine old house known as Gladstone's Land, dating back to 1631, which, though of no particular historical importance, is a very good specimen of a town house in the days of Charles I. The curious arcading, still to be seen in the windows of Ramage's Dairy, is worth notice, and so is the outside stair leading to the first floor.

Near to Gladstone's Land is Lady Stair's Close. Here the parents of Susan Ferrier, the novelist, lived when first married, and here also "honest Dick Steele" of "Spectator" fame, being sent up north in 1717 on business connected with the Forfeited Estates Commission, gave a grand banquet in a tavern to a large party of beggars he had picked up in the street, which so delighted him that he declared afterwards he had "drunk enough of native drollery to compose a comedy."

But Dick Steele and the Ferriers pale into insignificance when one turns to the life of the principal resident in the close, Lady Stair herself, whose house, restored and turned into a museum, has been presented to the city by Lord Rosebery. In her young days she was married to James, Viscount Primrose of Castlefield, whose behaviour to her was certainly not that of a model husband. When she was dressing one morning, some

years after their marriage, he suddenly appeared in her room in an uncontrollable passion, with his drawn sword in his hand. She, convinced that he was bent on murder, threw herself out of the window, and escaped, half-dressed as she was, to her mother-in-law's house. Not unnaturally, she firmly declined to live with him again, and he went abroad, leaving her in peace in Edinburgh.

Some time afterwards, a fortune-teller visited the Canongate. Amusements were none too plentiful at that time, so Lady Primrose and a friend, after disguising themselves, went to hear their fates. The man produced a mirror and told Lady Primrose to look into it. She did so, and to her utter stupefaction, saw, not her own face, but a scene which she soon discovered to be a wedding party, and in which her husband figured as the bridegroom. As she looked she saw a clergyman about to join his hand with the bride's, when suddenly another man, whom she recognized as her own brother, rushed forward with his sword drawn, and the whole scene dissolved in confusion. Nothing more could be got out of the fortune-teller, so Lady Primrose went home and wrote down every detail of what she had seen, including the day and hour of its happening. Soon after this one of her brothers, who had been abroad, came home, and told her how, by chance, when visiting Rotterdam, he had been invited by a rich merchant to his daughter's wedding. She was to marry a Scotchman and he found on arriving at the church that the Scotchman was none other than his own already-married brother-in-law, Lord Primrose ! The circumstances and the date tallied exactly with her visit to the fortune-teller and what she had seen there.

In 1706 Lord Primrose died, to no one's regret, and his widow resolved to spend the rest of her life in single blessedness. Unluckily for her peace of mind she was attractive, and the Earl of Stair fell in love with her. Mindful of past experiences, she refused him, not once,

nor twice, but many times. The Earl was a man of strong will, however, and decided to settle matters in his own way. At that time Lady Primrose had a house with a little praying-closet looking on to the High Street, then, as always, the main street of the town. By dint of bribing a servant, he got himself let into this little room, and in the morning, when people began to go about their business, there was Lord Stair, standing, in the scantiest attire, at Lady Primrose's window! Tongues were set wagging in no time, and the episode ended as his Lordship intended it should, in the good-looking widow marrying him for the sake of her reputation.

Her life with him was happy, though in a drunken fury he did hit her in the face hard enough to draw blood, but, to do him justice, he was so contrite afterwards that, till the day of his death, in 1747, he never touched any liquor unless she gave it him with her own hands. During her twelve years of widowhood, after his death, Lady Stair lived in the close which bears her name, a well-known figure, partly on account of her own strongly-marked characteristics, and partly because she kept a black servant, an unusual sight and an endless source of comment for her neighbours. When the famous "Douglas Cause" * first threw Edinburgh society in a ferment, Lord Dundonald wrote to the Lord Justice-Clerk of the day, and told him that Lady Stair vowed the Douglas boys were illegitimate, adding that any one was at liberty to call him "a damned villain" if he did not speak the truth. In a very short time Lady Stair heard of the letter, and her fury knew no bounds. She ordered her chair straightway, and went to Holyrood, where the Duke and Duchess of Douglas were in residence. As soon as she was ushered into the room, she said three times over, "The Earl of Dundonald is a damned villain," emphasizing each

* See page 64.

repetition with a thump of her stick on the floor, then marched out again and returned to her close.

That must have been one of her last public appearances, for she died a few years afterwards, and the Lawnmarket lost one of its greatest characters.

Next to Lady Stair's Close came Baxter's Close, now swept away, but a tablet on the modern building facing the street commemorates the house where Burns stayed for some time in 1786. He arrived, unknown to fame, on a November day, so poor that all he could afford was a share of his friend John Richmond's bed, in a little room looking into the close, for which he paid the landlady three shillings a week. In a very little while the young Ayrshire farmer had taken society by storm. His poetry, his talk, his ideas, his clothes and manners were all full of the charm of novelty. Kitty Gordon, the celebrated Duchess of Queensberry, was fairly swept off her feet by him. Dugald Stewart, the philosopher, Robertson, the historian and divine, Lord Newton, the convivial judge, Miss Burnet, consumptive and fastidious, one and all were carried away by his wit, and the simple charm of his verse. Invitation cards showered heavily upon the strongly-built ploughman. No sort of festivity was complete without him, and after the fashionable crowd at Queensberry House, Burns was equally ready to spend the rest of the night at a tavern, where wit and manners were on a decidedly lower plane than was altogether good for him, as after results were to show. Ere long the chaff bed, deal table, and sanded floor of John Richmond's room gave place to more comfortable quarters at Mr. Nicoll's in Buccleuch Place, and Baxter's Close saw him no more.

CHAPTER III

ST. GILES'S, THE PARLIAMENT HOUSE, AND MARKET CROSS

SO much has been written already about Edinburgh's most famous church, its dedication to St. Giles, the presentaton to it of that saint's arm-bone by Sir William Preston of Gorton, the preachings of John Knox, and the historic (or otherwise) incident of Jenny Geddes and her stool, that we will pass over most of its history, and merely bring back to mind some of the less well-known incidents that concerned it, or took place within its walls.

On the south side of the church, the minute chapel, where Montrose now rests, is connected with a peaceful craftsman well worthy of remembrance. The reign of James IV was the great day of art, culture and trade—a day all too soon to be plunged into darkness at Flodden. During his father's reign Caxton had introduced printing into England, but Scottish barons, who termed the favourite architects and musicians of James III " masons and fiddlers," had neither knowledge of nor inclination for book-learning, and the invention that was to revolutionize the civilized world probably passed more or less unnoticed in the northern kingdom. But James IV and Margaret Tudor were keenly interested when one of the clerks at Holyrood, Walter Chepman by name, set up a clumsy printing press in Edinburgh, and gave him all the encouragement he needed. In a few years Chepman waxed rich, and according to the

piety of the age, he dedicated some of his money to the beautifying of St. Giles's by a small chapel, where prayers should be said " for the prosperity of the King and Queen, and also for the benefit of his own soul, and that of his wife, Mariote Kirkettill."

The Chepman Aisle was probably not yet finished when the great bell of the church, which still strikes the hours, began to ring wildly and discordantly, while all the bells in the city followed suit, making a jangle of sound, which struck fear into the hearts of those who heard it. It was September 10, 1513, and a weary, exhausted messenger had just brought news of the defeat at Flodden. The King had disappeared—whether dead or alive the messenger knew not—the finest of the nobility were lying dead on the field with their retainers around them ; the Provost was dead, and the Baillies and craftsmen who had marched with him under their famous banner, the Blue Blanket, were dead, dispersed, or prisoners, and, worst of all, the almost unprotected city might expect to see the victorious English army marching round Arthur's Seat in the course of a few days. At once the temporary Provost and Baillies who had been appointed to keep order within the city, summoned all able-bodied men to arm themselves, and all women to go to church and pray, instead of wailing in the streets. Rich and poor obeyed the order. Through the doors of the church poured the wives, mothers and daughters of the absent men, while lights flickered on the many altars and the priests offered up fervent prayers that the city might be delivered from the dreaded sack and burning. Delivered it was on this occasion, for Surrey showed no energy in following up his victory, but wasted time on the Border instead of capturing the defenceless town.

Forty-five years later, on September 1, 1558, the last St. Giles's Day procession started from the church. The old religion had already fallen upon evil days. The

preceding year, " that great idol called St. Giles " as John Knox described the effigy of the saint, which for years past had been carried in procession through the city on September 1, had been " first drowned in the North Loch, and after burned, which raised no small trouble in the town." The saint's arm-bone in its jewelled reliquary had likewise disappeared, but the priests were still there, and they decided to have the procession as usual. " A marmoset idol," to quote Knox again, was borrowed from the Grey Friars, who, true to their national characteristic of " canniness," insisted upon the deposit of " a silver piece " as security for its safe return. In front of St. Giles's " there assembled priests, friars, canons and rotten Papists," continues the uncompromising Knox, " with tabours and trumpets, banners and bagpipes. And who was there to lead the ring but the Queen Regent herself, with all the shavelings, for honour of that feast ? " At first all went well. Down the High Street went the procession to the foot of the Canongate, where it turned. Mary of Guise's presence imposed a certain restraint upon the crowd, but unluckily for St. Giles, she was going to dine at one Sandie Carpetyne's house, " betwixt the Bows," so that when she reached her destination on the return journey, " she left it [the procession] and passed in to her dinner."

Then the trouble began. The mob jostled the priests who carried the effigy, then they seized hold of the shrine and tried to shake it down. Finally they tore the figure away from its stand by sheer force, amid shouts of " Down with the idol ! down with it." " Some brag made the priests' patrons at the first," says Knox with his dour sense of the humorous, " but they soon saw the feebleness of their god, for one took him by the heels, and, dadding his head to the causeway, left Dagon without head or hands. . . . This considered, the priests and friars fled faster than they did at Pinkie

Cleuch! Down go the crosses, off go the surplices. . . . The Grey Friars gaped, the Black Friars blew, the priests panted and fled, and happy was he that first got into the house; for such a sudden fray never came among the generation of Antichrist within the realm before."

Such was the final deposition of St. Giles.

In a few more years St. Giles's was swept clear of all that made it beautiful; partitions were erected to make three separate churches, and John Knox preached interesting but not entirely edifying sermons on politics and the immorality of the age, as typified at Holyrood, to congregations that numbered often from two to three thousand.

Excellent though many of their qualities were, a sense of beauty, and a sense of proportion in things both spiritual and temporal, was sadly lacking in the Calvinists. Once the excitements of Mary's reign were over, a dreary period ensued, so far as St. Giles's was concerned, which seems redolent fo lengthy polemical sermons, the monotony of which was only broken by incidents such as Mr. Andrew Melville calling his Majesty King James VI "God's silly vassall" to his face, or James turning "crabbit" after much provocation, and ordering the minister out of the pulpit. Many years later, in 1627, a Benedictine monk, Baillie by name, ventured into the church, presumably well disguised, and was horrified at what he saw: "Bare walls, and pillars all clad with dust, sweepings, and cobwebs . . . and on every side the restless resorting of people treating of their worldly affairs; some writing and making obligations, contracts, and discharges, others laying counts and telling over sums of money. . . . Ye have made it a den of thieves."

Had Charles I had his way St. Giles's would have been restored to something, at any rate, of its former glory, but the experiment with the English Liturgy on Sunday, July 23, 1637, was not conducive to further innovations.

As for Jenny Geddes and her stool, why not treat old traditions like sleeping dogs? Gardiner, commenting in his history upon the theory that the riot was caused by lads disguised as women, remarks dryly that if 'prentices really had thrown the stools they would never have missed! So much we may allow Jenny Geddes, and there we can leave her.

In May, 1661, there was such a crowd round the church and such preparation for some great ceremony that the more ardent devotees of the Covenant must have felt as if the days of unenlightened prelacy were returning. Eleven years earlier the great Montrose, the "Chevalier sans peur et sans reproche" of that age, had gone to his doom amid every insult that unrestrained fanaticism could think of. Now his honour was to be vindicated for ever. In the preceding January his mutilated remains had been dug up from the unnamed felon's grave at the foot of the gallows on the Burghmuir (where St. Leonard's School stands to-day); the head which had been exposed for so long on the Tolbooth Tower had been taken down with every mark of reverence; the quarters which had been sent to Stirling, Glasgow, Perth, and Aberdeen were returned, such as could be found, and after lying in state in the chapel of Holyrood for four months, the royalist leader was to have honourable burial in the Chepman Aisle at St. Giles's. A vast concourse of people were assembled in the streets, at every window, on all the forestairs, on the roofs, and at the church door. As the procession left the Abbey, the trained-bands, who lined the route, fired a volley, to which the Castle replied by solemn thunderous salutes. The first to appear to the watchers at St. Giles's were a party of poor bedesmen in their blue gowns. Then came what were left of the personal retainers of the dead Marquis, leading his horse and carrying his banner, his spurs, corslet and gauntlets. Next to them followed the Provost and the Town Council

in their robes, and then the heralds with their pursuivants, all in gorgeous array. Then at last the coffin came in sight, borne upon the shoulders of fourteen earls, under a pall which was held up by twelve other noblemen. Behind their father's coffin walked his two sons, followed by a long procession of those who had come to pay their respects to the dead man. Never had greater honour been paid to a crowned head than was bestowed upon Montrose at St. Giles's that day, and in a cell at the Castle, listening to the guns which must have sounded like a death-knell in his ears, was Argyle, the man who, at Moray House,* had come out on to the balcony to gloat over the sight of a gallant enemy going to his doom.

With the toleration that the reign of William III brought in, the more exciting elements in the history of St. Giles's came to an end. For many a long year the hideous divisions marred the proportions of the old building, which justified Dr. Johnson's remark, " Come, let me see what was once a church," but in 1883, thanks to the exertions of Dr. Chambers, it was restored to something approaching its former glory, though the wanton destruction of the beautiful Norman door at the end of the eighteenth century, to save the expense of repair, was an act of vandalism for which no atonement could be made. The details of the various " restorations " and of the building of the Thistle Chapel can be found in most guide-books, together with a description of the various memorials, so here we will leave the church and pass on to the Parliament House nearby.

Leaving St. Giles's and crossing what was formerly Parliament Close, there is little indication that we are in the old graveyard of the church, where, in pre-Reformation days, citizens, soldiers, priests and noblemen, the witnesses of strange and stirring scenes in the days of Bruce and the earlier Stuart kings, were laid

* See page 89.

to rest in the peaceful precincts of St. Giles's. When Queen Mary gave the gardens of the Grey Friars' monastery to the city for a burial ground in 1566, desecration of the old graveyard had already begun, for when Parliament met in the Tolbooth a crowd of lackeys and retainers loitered and quarrelled among the gravestones outside. Then, with the building of the Parliament House in 1639 came the paving of the ground between it and the church, and the final disappearance of all trace of its original use. In later years the stone marked I. K. 1572 was let into the pavement, approximately over John Knox's grave, and there close beside him is the statue of Charles II, who, with "his back turned," as Stevenson puts it, "seems to be trotting clumsily away from his dangerous neighbour." Originally it was intended that Cromwell should bestride the "tunbellied charger," and no doubt his presence would have been more agreeable to Knox, but the Restoration intervened before the work was completed and the Merry Monarch took his place. It is a little difficult to judge whether the conjunction is the result of a pleasantly subtle sense of humour on the part of the powers that ruled the city, or a complete lack of it. In any case, it is, to quote Sir Daniel Wilson, "as strange a monument to the Great Apostle of Presbyterianism as fancy could devise!"

All the goldsmiths' shops formerly congregated in Parliament Close, and in one of them, James Gilliland's, Raeburn worked as an apprentice. The story goes that David Deuchar, the engraver, who often came to see Gilliland on business, noticed that the boy always thrust something hastily into a drawer when he heard anyone coming. Catching him by surprise one day, Deuchar discovered that he was studying his own features in a mirror, and questioned him sharply about it. Young Raeburn confessed that he was trying to draw himself. The engraver began to get interested, and, suspecting

the lad had artistic talent, offered to give him a course of lessons. The offer was accepted gratefully, and the upshot was that Gilliland allowed him to break his apprenticeship, and Raeburn, instead of becoming a goldsmith, worked out his very brilliant destiny as a portrait painter.

The Parliament House, with its magnificent roof, was only built in 1639, but in the sixty-eight years of its Parliamentary career it saw events enough to make up for the absence of a halo of antiquity. The workmen had hardly removed their tools before Montrose, with Loudon, Lindsay, Rothes, and their followers, came here to consult about the National Covenant. On May 17, 1650, Loudon, and other former friends, now members of the Committee of Estates, met together hurriedly in the Hall, to decide the fate of Montrose, the news of whose capture they had just heard, and a shameful decision they came to.

After the battle of Dunbar a number of the prisoners taken by Cromwell were confined in the " Laigh Parliament House " immediately below the Great Hall, where their guard of troopers passed their time in preaching to all who would listen. Luckily for the prisoners the virtues of Independents and Presbyterians were so hotly combated that the guard grew lax in the chief part of their duty, and their charges were able to cut a hole in the ceiling of their prison through which all but two escaped.

After the Restoration the Duke of York and his Duchess attended a great banquet given here by the town, and a little later he was present, whether willingly or otherwise, at the trial and torture of the Covenanters, which took place in the " Laigh Parliament House," now one of the rooms of the Advocates' Library. In those times of torture and brutal execution the spirit of the Covenanters ought to have compelled the admiration even of Sir George Mackenzie and his adherents.

To defy old Dalziell of Binns, calling him "a Muscovy beast" to his face, as Forman did in that dark and gloomy Hall, where the boots and the thumbscrews lay ready to hand, especially when he was considered to be an incarnation of the Devil himself, with all his attributes of fire and brimstone, must have required courage of conviction of no ordinary degree.

In 1707 the last Scottish Parliament met in the Hall and the dwellers in the High Street looked down upon the last "riding of Parliament," the procession up the street from Holyrood. They saw the Commissioners for burghs each attended by a lackey, the Commissioners for shires with two, the Barons, Viscounts and Earls each with a gentleman to carry his train and three lackeys to walk behind him. Then came the heralds, gorgeous figures in their tabards, who rode in front of the "Honours of Scotland," the crown, sword and sceptre, each in the hands of its hereditary bearer. Next came the Lord High Commissioner, the Duke of Queensberry, followed by a train of pages and footmen. Behind him rode the Dukes with gentlemen train-bearers and eight lackeys apiece, while the Marquises (six lackeys each for them) came next, and the Duke of Argyle, Red John of Battles, brought up the rear with a squadron of Horse Guards.

All this state and magnificence was the prelude to such a session of bribery and double-dealing that the very lackeys at the doors might have blushed for their masters. Fletcher of Saltoun denounced the Union in burning eloquence, and Lockhart played the part of an honest man, but "happily for Scotland, English bribes outweighed the mistaken zeal of Scottish patriotism and Jacobitism united against the measure." Needless to say that part of the business was not intended for the public eye, but the indefatigable Lockhart discovered and published the sums received, a few years later. Thus we know that while Queensberry, at any rate,

valued what was considered to be his country's liberty at £12,325, the Duke of Montrose was willing to accept £200, and Lord Banff was bought, the cheapest of the whole party, for £11 12*s*. Still, in whatever way it was done, it *was* done, and the Lord High Commissioner was thankful to find himself safely in London with the signed Treaty of Union in his hand.

Its former function at an end, the Parliament Hall was dedicated to judges and advocates instead of politicians, and its earlier memories are almost swallowed up to-day in recollections of the great judges and lawyers of the eighteenth century. There was Lord President Forbes, Duncan Forbes of Culloden, who did his best to obtain mercy for the rebels of the '45, while it was largely owing to his efforts that many of the clans remained loyal to King George and the victory at Culloden was not reversed; Monboddo, Kames, Hailes, and Dundas at Arniston the first, who kept an hour-glass beside him and would never listen to another word from a judicial brother once the last grain of sand had run out; Hermand and Newton, the two genial old topers; Henry Dundas, the first Lord Melville, called the "Pharos of Scotland," because "who steered upon him was safe; who disregarded his light was wrecked." The younger generation: John Clerk of Eldin; Scott; Cockburn, always a Whig even when it was against his own interest; Brougham, who nearly badgered the life out of the half-senile old Lord Eskdale, with his acuteness; Horner, "with the ten commandments written on his face," and many others, have paced up and down this "salle des pas perdus." Bringing up the rear some fifty years later came Robert Louis Stevenson, as preposterous an advocate as ever wore a gown. His clients seem also to have been of that opinion, for the total financial results of his legal career were exactly four guineas.

At the east end of Parliament Square, a little apart

from the hum of men in the High Street, stands the ancient shaft and modern octagon tower of the Market Cross. If stones could only be provided with tongues, that shaft might give an eye-witness's testimony of nearly all the joys and sorrows that go to make up the history of Edinburgh. It could certainly preach a most eloquent sermon in stone on the mutability of human affairs. In its former position, at the head of Fish-market Close, it saw all the comings and goings of centuries. The basin at its foot flowed freely with wine when James IV and his bride entered the city in 1503. It saw the citizens mustering under the Blue Blanket in eagerness to begin the march that ended at Flodden. It listened while the temporary Provost read his stout-hearted proclamation when news of that disaster reached the city. It saw heretics going to their death at the stake in James V's reign, when the power of the Church was still supreme; and in 1563, when Mary was on the throne, a Roman Catholic priest, James Tarbat by name, was tied to its shaft, in all his vestments, with a chalice between his hands, and there pelted with "Easter egges," as Knox calls the stones the mob threw at him, for an hour, all for having said mass at Holyrood on Easter Day. Knox declares he was pelted to death, but a more merciful version of the story says that he was rescued alive by the Provost. Darnley proclaimed his innocence of Rizzio's murder at the foot of the Cross, and Bothwell was here accused of murdering Darnley. Thieves and murderers were executed here, or suffered the brutal punishments of branding, tongue-boring, ear-cropping and such like, while at the same time the Cross was the meeting-place for peaceful merchants and dealers who came here to arrange their business matters. Pageants were given here on Queen Mary's entry into the city in 1561, and the proclamation of her deposition and King James's accession was read here in 1567. The brave Kirkaldy of Grange, who held the Castle for

the Queen, was hanged here in 1573, and a few years later, Morton, who brought about his death, suffered himself, at the hands of the "Maiden." The Cross, which had seen Edinburgh sacked by Hertford's men in 1544, heard James VI of Scotland proclaimed King of England in 1603. It saw him go to St. Giles's to hear his farewell sermon, and in 1617 it was furbished up and given a new octagonal tower in honour of his return to his native city.

On February 22, 1638, in the excitement which preceded the signing of the National Covenant, Montrose, in his enthusiasm, insisted upon giving vent to his feelings by climbing up on to the scaffold itself, and standing on a puncheon which stood there. Rothes, who was by, said dryly, "James, you will never be at rest till you be lifted up there above the rest in three fathom of rope," a grim prophecy which the Cross saw grimly fulfilled thirteen years later. A year after Montrose's death the Royal Arms and the crown on the unicorn's head were pulled down and hung on the gallows amid the cheers and jeers of the populace. Cromwell was here proclaimed Protector of England, Scotland and Ireland in 1654, on which occasion a display of fireworks was given at night to the wonderment of all beholders. In 1660 the tables were turned once more, the Cross was wreathed with flowers and its fountain ran with claret in honour of the Restoration. Bells were rung, bonfires lit, cannons fired, and, to the horror of the precisions, the people began "dansing" about the Cross, while the magistrates, and all else who wished, drank the King's health upon bended knees, throwing the empty glasses over their shoulders, so that no fewer than "thrie hundreth dosane" were broken.

The Solemn League and Covenant was burned at the Cross by the hangman in 1682; and in 1689, after James VII had fled, William and Mary were proclaimed in his stead. In 1745 James VIII was proclaimed

King by the heralds, with his son, Prince Charles Edward, for Regent, and when Cumberland's victorious troops returned to Edinburgh the standards carried by the Jacobites at Culloden were burned ignominiously at the foot of the Cross.

In 1756 it was the turn of the old Cross itself to taste the mutability of all things. The Town Council decided that it was an obstruction in the street and must go. The octagonal tower built for James VI's return was destroyed, the stone basin, which had formerly run with claret, fell into Scott's hands and is still preserved at Abbotsford. The shaft was taken by Lord Somerville to his house, the Drum, near Edinburgh, where it remained for many years, and in 1866 it was placed in St. Giles's near the Napier tomb. Finally, in 1885, when Mr. Gladstone was Member for Midlothian, he had a new tower built for it, not on its former site, but at the entrance to Parliament Square, where the old shaft looks down once more upon what is passing around it. Its life is less exciting in these days, though there are moments when it returns to the importance of its earlier days. Whenever a royal proclamation has to be read, the heralds, pursuivants, and trumpeters, all in full dress, ascend the tower, and there read his Majesty's behests to the assembled crowd, with all the old ceremonies, giving for a few minutes a touch of that mediæval picturesqueness and colour which modern life lacks so sadly.

CHAPTER IV

THE HIGH STREET FROM THE LAWN-MARKET TO THE BRIDGES

ON the north side of the street the first entry below St. Giles's Street is the narrow Byres Close, within which still stands what was once the town house of the Bishops of Orkney, a fine old building rounded into an apse at its northern end. When Queen Mary was on the throne, this house and the see of Orkney were both occupied by Adam Bothwell. He it was who, hastily summoned to Holyrood, performed the fatal marriage between Mary and Bothwell. Like many of the clergy of his day, the Bishop was an adept at trimming his sails to every breeze. Beginning, of course, as a Catholic, he joined the Reformers when convenient, though he only went as far as was consistent with holding the Orkneys as an episcopal see. Then, after marrying Mary to Bothwell, he deserted her at the ebb of her fortunes, and is said to have promised to preach a sermon in the chapel at Holyrood, acknowledging his sin in performing the ceremony. He afterwards crowned James VI, and, steering a careful course through the troubled waters of that monarch's earlier years, died peacefully in Byres Close, and was buried honourably at Holyrood in the Chapel Royal.

In the middle of the next century the house belonged to Sir William Dick of Braid, one of the first merchant princes of Scotland. "He had ships on every sea, and

could ride on his own lands from North Berwick to near Linlithgow." His fortune, which amounted to about £200,000 sterling, was so enormous in those days that his neighbours believed he had discovered the secret of the philosopher's stone. Unluckily for him he was too rich to live quietly in Byres Close undisturbed by politics, and politics were his ruin. In 1641 he advanced 100,000 merks to the Covenanters to keep them from disbanding their army, and, a little later, another large sum to send men to Ulster to protect the Scottish colony there. So far so good, but in a few years he found himself on the horns of a dilemma. The King, against whom the Covenanters wished to defend their rights, was getting into more serious straits daily. That was quite satisfactory, but then, and here the rub came, it was not the Covenanters who were winning, but the Uncovenanted Independent, Cromwell, whose opinions inspired Sir William with greater horror than the King's. After much indecision he sent £20,000 to support the Royalist army, and when that was swallowed up like a drop in the ocean, he contributed again and yet again, to the indignation of his neighbours, who preferred the Cromwellian horn to the Royal. Then the end came. Cromwell marched into Scotland and levied a fine of £65,000 upon the Provost's already depleted fortune. Being unable to raise the money, he was sent to London, and there, in 1655, the richest man in Scotland died, ruined and in bitter poverty, in the common prison.

Turning from tragedy on the east side of the close, we find comedy awaiting us on the west. In the seventeen-fifties the fourth flat of this land was occupied by one of the judges, Lord Coalstoun. In those days advocates and judges put on their wigs, cravats and gowns in their own houses, when they got up. They breakfasted early, and then, if the day were clement, would lean out of their windows, and gossip with their

friends on the other side of the close, or breathe in the not particularly delicate aroma of the morning air, until the bell at St. Giles's struck quarter to nine, and it was time to go to the courts. Now, among his neighbours were two mischievous little girls in the flat two floors above, who amused themselves one morning by lowering an unfortunate kitten from their window at the end of a string. Lord Coalstoun, his heavily-wigged head well out of the window, all unconscious of the doings above, was in the kitten's direct line of descent. The hapless animal, finding something to hold on to at last, fixed its claws firmly in the wig. The two girls, seeing what was happening, hastily drew it up again, but the kitten, determined not to let go of its hope of salvation, clung all the tighter, and up went the wig as well. His Lordship, rudely awakened from his contemplative attitude, looked up just in time to see it, apparently drawn upward to the skies by no visible means. His horror and amazement was removed later by the return of the wig with humble apologies from the offenders' parents, but the old judge's morning survey must have been completely spoilt by the memory of the accident, for many days to come.

Advocates' Close, from which a good view of the Bishop of Orkney's house can be got, has been considerably altered in recent times. The first door on the east side is old, however, and formerly led to the house of Andrew Crosbie, the convivial advocate, remembered to-day as the original of Counsellor Pleydell in "Guy Mannering." Yet another distinction he has, and no mean one either. He held his own with Dr. Johnson at a supper party which Boswell gave at James's Court. Although Johnson thundered contempt and contradiction upon the lawyer's opinions, he was so much pleased with the intellect displayed that he honoured him with an invitation to breakfast and a continuance of the discussion next time he was in London.

Poor Crosbie was not so successful in dealing with his own affairs as he was (under Scott's masterly guidance) in unravelling the tangled concerns of the Bertrams of Ellangowan. He built himself a large house in St. Andrew Square and then lost almost his whole fortune in the failure of the Douglas and Heron Bank. The bottle assumed larger proportions than ever in his daily life, with the eventual result that friends, practice and happiness all fell away from him. "Counsellor Pleydell," who should have lived to a good old age untroubled save by gout, fell at last into mental and bodily decay, and died, miserably poor, in 1784.

Still keeping to the north side of the street, we pass Roxburgh Close, where it is said the Dukes of Roxburgh once had their town house, and the old-fashioned front of W. & R. Chambers's publishing offices, where William and Robert Chambers, whose lives are among the romances of trade, rose to fame and fortune, and come to Warriston's Close. A clean sweep has been made of all that belonged to the past, though a tablet on the east side tells us that John Knox's manse once stood here.

Writers' Court comes next to Warriston's Close, with a name reminiscent of the days when lawyers lived within a few yards of the Parliament House. Here stood Clerihugh's "Star and Garter Tavern," another of those curious haunts where merchants, magistrates and other sober-minded gentry threw off the cares of the day, and indulged in "high jinks" which were not celebrated either for refinement or decorum. For the best description of Clerihugh's turn to "Guy Mannering" again, and read how, on a certain Saturday night, Colonel Mannering and Dandie Dinmont sought and found Counsellor Pleydell in full enjoyment of a convivial evening.

On the other side of the Royal Exchange is Allan's Close, where Deacon Brodie kept the dark lantern and

skeleton keys which he required in the exercise of his supplementary profession as burglar.

Next to Allan's is Craig's Close, where yet another celebrated tavern was established. The "Cape Club" met here in the "Isle of Man Arms," kept by James Mann. Ferguson the poet, Runciman the painter, Sir Henry Raeburn and the ubiquitous Deacon Brodie, who seems to crop up continually as one walks down the High Street, were all members, and passed many an evening at this club, which met, like the others, for the worship of Bacchus and "high jinks."

Opposite Craig's Close, on the south side of the street, is the Old Fishmarket Close, dominated now by police offices, which in its day has been the home of such varied personalities as George Heriot, Daniel Defoe (who worked as secret agent for the English Government at the time of the Union), Dundas of Arniston (the first Lord President of that name), and the town executioner. Once more one is amazed at the insensibility of the nostrils of these Old Town inhabitants, for this close, as its name tells, was the chosen abode of the fish-sellers. Lord Cockburn's vivid description of the place gives one a glimpse of what Lord President Dundas, the hangman, and others had to put up with. Fish shops were unheard of until about 1822, and the only market was in this close, "a steep, narrow, stinking ravine." The fish, brought up in carts from Newhaven, were "thrown out on the street at the head of the close, whence they were dragged down by dirty boys and dirtier women, and then sold unwashed—for there was not a drop of water in the place—from old rickety, scaly, wooden tables, exposed to all the rain, dust and filth : an abomination the recollection of which greatly impaired the pleasantness of the fish at a later hour of the day."

On the south side of the street follow Borthwick's Close, which takes its name from a Master of Artillery in the days of James IV, the Old Assembly Close, where,

in the first half of the eighteenth century, dances of the most select character imaginable were held, and Covenant Close, in which the Solemn League and Covenant was placed for signature. Passing Burnet's Close, the next entry is Bell's Wynd, where the last assemblies of the High Street were held after the rooms in the Old Assembly Close were discarded in 1758 as too small. Though the rooms themselves, like practically all the old buildings on that side of the street, disappeared during or after the great fires of 1824, it is impossible to pass by the close without a tribute to Miss Nicky Murray, the lady-directress, whose rule over Edinburgh balls rivalled that of Beau Nash at Bath. If a stranger to her laws thought he might ask a lady of his acquaintance to dance, he was speedily disillusioned. At the opening of the season all the ladies who were " passed " by Miss Nicky as eligible for the assemblies put their fans into a hat, and the men, coming up one by one, drew a fan haphazard, the owner of which was his partner for the whole winter. Woe betide the couples who tried to change partners, for the lady-directress, who occupied a sort of throne on a dais at one end of the room, had her eagle eye upon them in a trice. She was equally particular about the rank of those she directed. " Miss B. of *what* ? " she would inquire, when the name of some aspirant to the assemblies came up, and, if no territorial appellation was forthcoming, the case was dismissed with a wave of the autocrat's fan. The camel certainly had an easier task with the eye of the needle than those who claimed admittance for wealth rather than birth, with Miss Nicky Murray.

Oliver Goldsmith, who came to Holyrood in 1753, in the train of the Duke of Hamilton, went to a ball in the Old Assembly Close, and groaned over the formalities of the festivities. Oliver, proud of the new blue satin suit and laced hat, which his improved finances enabled him to acquire, evidently hoped to make an

impression upon Scottish hearts, and was aghast at finding all the ladies seated by themselves at one end of the room, while " At the other end stand their pensive partners that are to be, but no more intercourse between the sexes than between two countries at war. The ladies, indeed, may ogle, and the gentlemen sigh, but an embargo is laid on any closer commerce." Still, however strict the discipline might be, there were always deep regrets when the last dance was finished, and a crowd of supplicants surrounded Miss Nicky's throne pleading for one more. But the hour had struck ; a single wave of her imperious fan was sufficient to silence the musicians who were tuning up for yet another reel, and dismiss the dancers to the sedans that were waiting to bear them home.

The next point of interest on the south side is the Tron Church, a seventeenth-century building which was ruthlessly shorn of two aisles to make room for the South Bridge and Hunter Square. As long as the High Street continued to be an aristocratic haunt, the Tron Church, or Christ's Church at the Tron, to give its name in full, was regularly attended by the fashionable world, so much so that it was known to the irreligious as the " Maiden Market." Here, on Sunday morning, the young bucks, wearing their smartest full-skirted coats and their newest wigs, whiled away the slow dropping of the sand through the hour-glass in studying the belles of the aristocratic closes, sitting demurely beside their respective parents.

In June, 1824, the old wood-and-lead steeple was burnt. The fire was discovered in the middle of the day, and, on hearing the news, lawyers and judges forgot their day's work and went out to see the sight. Lord Cockburn, who was among them, describes how the flames " seized on every projecting point and played with the fretwork, as if it had been an exhibition. The outer covering boards were soon consumed, and the lead

dissolved. This made the strong upright and cross-beams visible ; and these stood, with the flame lessened, but with the red fire increased, as if it had been a great burning toy. The conflagration was long presided over by a calm and triumphant gilded cock on the top of the spire, which seemed to look on the people and listen to the crackling in disdain. But it was undermined at last, and dived down into the burning gulf, followed by the upper half of the steeple. The lower half held out a little longer, till, the very bell being melted, this half came down also, with a world of sparks. There was one occurrence which made the gazers start. It was about a quarter before twelve, when the minute hand of the clock stood horizontally. The internal heat —for the clock was untouched outwardly—cracked the machinery, and the hand dropped suddenly and silently down to the perpendicular. When the old timekeeper's function was done, there was an audible sigh from the spectators." Among the crowd who had hurried out from the Courts was Sir Walter Scott, who had often sat in the church when his father was a seat-holder there. He turned away when the last of the spire fell in, and said, half in sadness, to those around him : " Eh, sirs ! Mony a weary sermon hae I heard beneath that steeple."

Returning to the north side of the street, the entry opposite Borthwick's Close still bears the name of Old Post Office Close, recalling the days when one postman was sufficient for the needs of the whole town, and the office was established in the very narrow quarters the close afforded. Facing the street here is a fine old land which must have seen all that has passed in the High Street from the time, probably of James VI, or even Queen Mary. Then comes Anchor Close, on the west side of which is a door, shabby, dirty and neglected, surmounted by the inscription, " O Lord, in the is al my traist." Here we may pause for a moment, for this

door takes us straight back to the claret-drinking days of the eighteenth century. It was once the entrance to Douglas's Tavern.

If you could open that door in the spirit of the past, you would find yourself first in a long narrow passage, terminating in a flight of steps, and then in a large kitchen, where the light of the roaring fire flickered upon pots and pans, spits, jacks, a group of slipshod servants, and last, but by no means least, on the magnificent bulk of the landlady. Mrs. Douglas was splendidly immovable. Dressed in a silk gown, picked out with sunflowers and tulips, she was always seated by the kitchen door, ready to issue commands to husband and servants, or to bow graciously to favoured guests. Ordering his supper as he passed through—tripe, rizzared haddies, minced collops or some such succulent dish—the visitor went on to the string of small stuffy rooms opening, one out of the other, beyond. Here a meek little man, with a gentle voice, fluttered from one party to another—Daniel or Daunay Douglas, proprietor of the tavern, and husband of the grande dame in the kitchen. And those parties? There were judges, lawyers, citizens of renown and otherwise, poets (for did not Burns himself make one of their number during his winter in Edinburgh?), professors from the University and ministers as well. But of all the ghosts that might pass through the old door on a dark misty night the greatest, in more senses than one, would be the portly figure of Lord Newton.* If you look at his portrait by Raeburn in the Scottish National Gallery, you have him before you, a man, as Cockburn said, "famous for law, paunch, whist, claret, and worth." No wonder his friends called him "The Mighty." Even in those days there were few who could drink off three large bottles of claret at a sitting and then dictate a remarkably clear and succinct law paper without a mistake!

* See page 193.

There were no High Jinks when he was present—no unseemly merriment or roaring songs. To quote Cockburn again: "The kindly stillness of his ordinary manner, instead of being disturbed, was deepened by potation; and a cask so well seasoned was not likely to be inflamed by anything so feeble as intoxication. His delight was to sit smiling, quiet and listening: saying little, but that little always sensible—for he used to hold that conversation, at least when it was of the sort that excites admiration, spoiled good company." Even Charles Lamb might have got over his dislike of the Scotch, could he have seen Newton smiling happily and benignly over his bumper of claret, disturbed by nothing but the degenerate sobriety of the younger men who were rising up in place of the old topers.

Below Anchor Close is Geddes's Entry, where a medallion in the wall facing the street, marks James Gillespie's shop. Here, in the eighteenth century came all the élite, to buy the snuff made at Gillespie's Mill on the Water of Leith near Colinton. That valley was celebrated once for its snuff-mills, and even in these days the last survivor of an old industry still ekes out an existence, though all the others have now closed down or been turned to more remunerative purposes. In the eighteenth century snuff-making was a most prosperous trade, and Gillespie not only waxed rich, but set up a carriage, to the surprise and indignation of his old-fashioned customers. He had no children, but he adopted a young man, who learnt the snuff-trade and was always looked upon as the heir to his guardian's fortunes. Unluckily Gillespie's besetting sin was vanity, and when he was gathered to his fathers, in 1797, the reading of the will revealed that his whole fortune was to go to the building and endowing of Gillespie's Hospital for the aged poor. To build the said hospital one of the very few mediæval buildings the town possessed was ruthlessly demolished—the old Wryttes-Houses, a

keep surrounded by lower buildings, which had dominated the Borough Muir ever since the fourteenth century.

After Geddes's Entry we notice the head of North Foulis Close, where John Kay, the caricaturist whose "Portraits" bring back the characteristics of so many notabilities, died in 1826.

Then comes the opening of the gloomy but picturesque Old Stamp Office Close, and here again we must pause, to see something of Susannah, Countess of Eglinton, who spent many years of her long life here. The daughter of Sir Archibald Kennedy, she was born in 1689, and brought to Edinburgh for her first introduction to society early in the eighteenth century. Very tall but so well-proportioned that even in her teens she showed signs of the stateliness that made her such a magnificent figure in maturity, with as perfect a complexion as was ever seen, she created an immediate sensation, and became the favourite toast and subject for verses among the beaux of the High Street and Canongate, who racked what brains they had to find words to rhyme with Susannah, and were ready to drink themselves under the table nightly to show the depths of their devotion.

Her preference may have been for Sir John Clerk of Penicuik, but the fates had arranged matters otherwise. The Earl of Eglinton, forty years older than Susannah, had had bad luck matrimonially. His first wife had provided him with a large family of daughters, but only two sons, who had died in infancy. He hastily married again at her death. One more daughter was added to the nursery, and the second Countess lapsed into chronic invalidism. It was soon after this that Sir Archibald Kennedy asked the Earl's advice as to Sir John Clerk's proposals. With his usual tact and delicacy, Lord Eglinton is said to have replied, "Bide a wee, Sir Archy: my wife's unco sickly." The hint was taken,

Sir John was given his *congé*, and eventually, the sickly lady having obligingly departed, Susannah Kennedy became the third Lady Eglinton. Seven daughters were born of this ill-assorted match, and then, at last, when the old man was even contemplating divorce proceedings, the long-desired heir arrived and all was well.

She was left a widow in 1729, and devoted herself to the upbringing of her large family, who were all tall and handsome like herself. In the 'forties and 'fifties a chilly wait at the head of the Close was worth while if the end of it was rewarded by a glimpse of the Eglinton family going to the Assembly. Out of the dark alley emerged a procession of eight gilded sedan chairs, each with its liveried bearers, attended by footmen carrying links to light the way, and assist the occupants to descend on reaching their destination. A glimpse through the glass revealed handsome, animated faces, high-dressed powdered hair, silks, satins, and flashing jewels; then the last of the eight chairs disappeared, and the close seemed darker and gloomier than ever.

When Johnson was in Edinburgh in 1773, he and Boswell visited Lady Eglinton, then an old lady of eighty-four, either here, in Stamp Office Close, or else in Jack's Land in the Canongate, where she spent her last years. Ursa Major fell a victim to her charm at once, and, forgetting his dislike of the Scotch, grew gentle as a dove. Their views on Church and State agreed admirably, and the Countess was as pleased with the interview as he was, for, upon hearing that the Doctor was born the year after her marriage, she declared that he might have been her son, and that she would adopt him even now: as a token of which she put her arms round the neck of the untidy old man and kissed him as he was going away.

Leaving the memories of Johnson and Boswell behind, we pass on down the High Street to Lyon's Close, where, in one of the tall grimy old houses, the Misses Ramsay

kept a milliner's shop about the middle of the eighteenth century. In the early decades of the century, when the hand of the Presbyterian Church lay heavy upon Edinburgh, the vanities of dress were eyed askance, so much so that Ramsay of Ochtertyre says there was but one milliner for the whole town in 1720, and even in 1753 the Misses Ramsay had only three or four rivals to contend with. Many and many a time was the pattering of those absurd coloured slippers, which constituted the footgear of the time, heard in the narrow close, as the youth and beauty of the town picked their way to the shop upon hearing the pleasing news that the coach, or the London smack, had just brought a large selection of the very latest fashions in caps, bonnets, and lappets, which the Misses Ramsay respectfully wished to display to genteel and aristocratic customers. Their business in Lyon's Close must have been good, for they were able to retire upon very comfortable means to Marionville, a rather grim villa with a grim story attached to it, on the way to Restalrig.

Two men who won great eminence in their profession began humbly in Fleshmarket Close, the next opening on the north side. One was William Creech, whose book-shop in the Luckenbooths was famous throughout the land. He began with a few books for sale in the obscurity of one of the "laigh shops" or cellars, the low wooden doors of which, now whitewashed like the walls, are still to be seen as one passes up the close.

The other celebrity was Henry Dundas, who could only live with considerable economy, on the third floor, when he first practised as an advocate, far from the day when he practically ruled Scotland as Lord Melville, and upheld Tory principles throughout the dangerous days of the French Revolution. Certainly, young Whig barristers, like Cockburn, Clerk of Eldin, and Jeffrey, fared badly when there was talk of promotion, and

Braxfield's behaviour during the "Sedition Cases" of 1793 was by no means free of reproach, but Scotland not only remained quiet, but flourished and prospered under Dundas's rule, as she had not done for many centuries.

CHAPTER V

THE HIGH STREET FROM THE BRIDGES TO THE CANONGATE

ON the north side, close to one of the old public wells, is Carrubber's Close, now "improved" out of all historic interest, where Allan Ramsay built a playhouse about 1737. Allan, whose shop was near-by, hoped to get much profit from his venture, but he was before his time. Edinburgh was only just preparing to emerge from the dark age, in which plays were looked upon as directly instigated by Satan himself. The theatre was barely opened when the magistrates came down with the full weight of the law and closed it. After some years the building took a new lease of life as the meeting-place of a speculative club, known as the Pantheon. Then Dr. Moyse, the blind philosopher, gave lectures to the fashionable world on optics, the property of light and such-like subjects. After him followed the Bereans, a religious body, who presumably disagreed with their fellows sufficiently to found a sect of their own. They were succeeded by the Rowites, about whom it is sufficient to say "ditto, ditto," their chief claim for distinction being that the celebrated Edward Irving preached for them in his youth. Then came a "Relief" congregation, another name of mystery to the uninitiated, then the Secession made it their church. Finally, after being a Roman Catholic school, the walls, which had listened to the exponents of so many and various doctrines, were

pulled down to make way for Jeffrey Street, which, cut ruthlessly through the old closes, bearing away much that was interesting, insanitary and picturesque in its course.

Archbishop Spottiswood of St. Andrews, he who crowned Charles I, had a house in Carrubber's Close. It has long since been pulled down, though an inscription on the modern building which occupies its site recalls the earlier resident to one's memory.

On the south side of the street, almost opposite Carrubber's Close, is Niddry Street, the more or less modern successor of the narrow Niddry's Wynd, where James VI and Anne of Denmark took shelter with Nicol Edward, the Lord Provost, in January, 1591. James was usually on very good terms with the substantial citizens of Edinburgh. In the first place he liked their homely ways and the absence of readily-drawn swords, and in the second they supplied him with much-needed loans, and very often with food as well, for when His Majesty, attended by his suite, condescended to share the dinner of a wealthy tradesman, there was a considerable saving effected in the housekeeping expenses of Holyrood, a matter of some account when James had only the Scottish revenues to fall back upon.

On this occasion Francis,* Earl of Bothwell, had been troublesome, and the King gave orders to Sir James Sandilands to arrest him. But whether Bothwell would quietly submit to arrest was quite a different matter, and James, always nervous of complications in these affairs, thought it prudent to retire, with Queen, Chancellor and suite, to Nicol's house, where he stayed until things at Holyrood were comfortably arranged.

There was a little trouble in Niddry's Wynd on December 7, 1597, when Andrew Stalker, a goldsmith there, happened, " through some negligence," to murder a servant of the Earl of Angus. Stalker was imprisoned,

* Nephew of the famous Bothwell of Queen Mary's reign.

and at once the cry of "Armour, Armour!" arose in streets and closes. A host of journeymen and citizens flung down their tools, caught up pikes and helmets, which always lay ready to hand, and demanded the culprit's pardon. James, on being appealed to, sent their leader, John Williamson, to arrange matters with Angus. After some discussion the young men of the city offered their "manreid" or bond to serve the Earl in war or feud. The offer was accepted, Stalker was released, the helmets and breastplates went back under the booths again, and all parties were satisfied and happy, except possibly the relatives of the dead man.

At the foot of the street is St. Cecilia's Hall, which is dealt with in the chapter on the Cowgate.

Crossing back to the opposite side of the street, there is Bishop's Close, where the unhappy Lady Jane Douglas lived. The sister of the childless Duke of Douglas, she was privately married when in her forty-eighth year to Colonel Stewart of Grantully, a soldier of fortune and a rolling stone. The two went abroad in 1746, soon after the wedding, and returned in 1749 with twin boys and a request to the Duke to recognize them as the next heirs instead of the Hamiltons, who would have inherited everything in the ordinary course of events. The Duke refused to do so, having only heard of the marriage six months before, and the Duchess of Hamilton, one of "the beautiful Gunnings," mother of the original heir, declared that the twins were not Lady Jane's at all, and certainly Lady Jane was never able to bring forward satisfactory witnesses of their birth, or even to remember the house in Paris where it took place. A long and weary lawsuit dragged on interminably. The Stewarts were miserably poor, for the Duke of Douglas stopped Lady Jane's allowance of £300 a year, which was all the pair had to live on, as soon as he received news of the marriage, and the

Colonel was put into prison for debt. In the summer of 1753 the younger of the twins died, and in November of the same year Lady Jane died too. Still the suit dragged on, fresh witnesses being brought to Edinburgh and refuted by others: papers enough to carpet the Parliament House were written, and then, at last, in 1767, decision was given against the twins, much to the joy of the Hamiltons. But their triumph was short-lived—the Douglas party appealed to the House of Lords, and two years later the suit closed with a reversal of the decision of the Scotch courts. Lady Jane triumphed at last, though not until she had been sixteen years in her grave.

Such, in brief, is the story of the great "Douglas Cause" which kept Edinburgh society in a ferment for years, and divided the fashionable world into two camps, though, on the whole, the sympathy of the country was with Lady Jane.

Passing North Gray's and Morrison's Closes, we come to Baillie Fyfe's, in a school at the foot of which the future Lord Jeffrey was taught his letters. On the right hand of Paisley Close, facing the High Street, is an old shop window, filled, in the late eighteenth century, with the rather limited groceries of the time. Here William Fettes served behind the counter with such success that he became Lord Provost, a Baronet, and the founder of Fettes College as well.

In Chalmers' Close there is another reminiscence of Jeffrey, for it was here that his grandfather kept a barber's and wigmaker's shop. But for the principal interest of the place one must turn to Stevenson's "Edinburgh," and read in his vivid words the account of the old land which collapsed in 1861, carrying thirty-five of its inhabitants with it, and resolving itself into a mighty heap of dust and ruin. One boy, though buried deep in the débris, was marvellously saved by an oak beam just above him holding up the mass of

stones and planks which would otherwise have crushed him. The rescuers above, digging out the killed and injured, heard him calling to them, "Heave awa', lads, I'm no deid yet," and were able to get him out before the beam collapsed. The house that replaced the fallen land commemorates the event with a boy's head in stone over the entry, and has been known ever since as the "Heave Awa' House."

Next to Chalmers' Close is Menteith's, where, according to tradition, the wise Bishop Kennedy of St. Andrews, who died in 1466, had his town house. For many years his influence as counsellor and Lord High Chancellor to James II and James III was exerted wisely for the welfare of his country, and his life stands out in pleasing contrast to the selfish and time-serving policy of so many of his contemporaries.

At the head of Trunk Close was the shop which first brought fame and renown to Archibald Constable. He set up here in 1795, and in 1802 his reputation rose high with the publication of the "Edinburgh Review," and the generous payment given to contributors, far in advance of anything they had known before.

Familiar to the eye in print, postcard, and guide-book is John Knox's house, jutting well out into the street just below Trunk Close. One would like to call to mind grim old Knox writing his sermons, letters, Book of Discipline, history, and controversial matters here. One would like to summon up pictures of conferences with Murray, Morton, Ruthven, Lindsay, and their followers. One would like to picture him looking down with a certain humorous smile at the crowd which "deposed" St. Giles, in the course of the last religious procession of the old régime, but unluckily Knox's connection with the house was short.

In early days it had been the residence of the Abbots of Dunfermline, then, abandoned by the church at the time of the Reformation, it became the residence of

James Mossman, who held the important position of goldsmith to Queen Mary. His initials J. M., and those of Marriot Arres his wife M. A., are still to be seen over the doorway.

In 1572, John Knox returned to Edinburgh from St. Andrews, a dying man. Kirkaldy of Grange still held the Castle, and Knox's Manse, in Warriston's Close, was considered neither suitable nor safe for its invalid owner. James Mossman, faithful to the Queen, was shut up in the Castle with Kirkaldy, so the Town Council, seizing his house, had it made ready with a warm panelled study for the great reformer. That was in August, and for a while he was able to preach in the "Little Kirk" at St. Giles's, though his voice was weak and feeble. He may even have spoken to a crowd outside from what is called his "preaching window," but his infirmities were increasing rapidly. His last sermon was preached on November 11 of that year. Two days later he took to his bed, and on Monday, November 24, he died. When his funeral left this old house by the Netherbow, a vast procession of mourners of all ranks followed him to his grave on the south side of St. Giles's, where the Regent Morton summed up his character in the famous eulogy, "There lies one who neither feared nor flattered any flesh." Then, by way of an anti-climax, his resting-place was more or less forgotten, and the I. K. engraved on the slab in Parliament Square was not put there until long after his death, when the spot could only be ascertained approximately.

Retracing our steps a little way, and returning to the south side of the street where we left it at Dickson's Close, we pass Cant's Close and come to Strichen's, once the residence of the Abbots of Melrose, part of whose house still remains, probably, incorporated with the building that bears a coat of arms over the door and the date 1600, though by that time, of course,

abbots and their houses were things of the past. At the time of the Reformation Abbot Andrew Durie lived in the close, and, according to Knox, he was so shocked and horrified at the uproar and desecration of September 1, 1558, when the procession of St. Giles was wrecked and put to flight, that he died soon afterwards.

The next occupant of interest was Sir George Mackenzie of Rosebaugh, King's Advocate in the reigns of Charles II and James VII, who has gone down to posterity with the soubriquet of "Bluidy Mackenzie." "Bluidy" he undoubtedly was towards Covenanters, and often must he have come out of this old doorway on his way up to the Parliament House, from whence he sent many an unfortunate fanatic to "glorify God in the Grassmarket." But there was another side to his nature as well. His works on Scottish law were long held in high esteem, and his knowledge of lighter literature was far above that of the majority of his countrymen at that time. He corresponded with Dryden, gave splendid entertainments, which were the wonder of all his neighbours, and founded the Advocates' Library as well. There was much about him, in fact, that was by no means "bluidy."

Blackfriars Street, formerly Wynd, comes next to Strichen's Close, and though it has long since been widened, to the destruction of the whole of its east side, so many scenes have been enacted here that it must have more than a cursory glance.

From about 1507 until after Flodden in 1513, Walter Chepman, the first Scottish printer, who built the Chepman Aisle in St. Giles's, lived in a house at the High Street end of the close, and must often have gone down the old Wynd, on his way to his printing-press in the Cowgate, accompanied probably, on more than one occasion, by his master and patron, James IV, who was keenly interested in the new invention and what it portended.

At the opposite end was the palace of James Beaton, Archbishop of Glasgow, and of his nephew, David Beaton, the Cardinal, who was murdered at St. Andrews in 1546, but he, and the famous "Cleanse the Causeway" tulzie, will be dealt with in the chapter on the Cowgate.

One of the few old houses that Blackfriars Street can still boast of is on the west side, with a door surmounted by a blank shield and a coronet, supported by two greyhounds. This was the residence of the Earl of Morton, the famous Earl who became Regent, and was finally beheaded at the Market Cross for his share in Darnley's murder. He and his kindred Lords of the Congregation, as well as Knox and other preachers, must have been familiar figures in the narrow wynd, in the very troubled years succeeding Mary's abdication.

On a certain Saturday in 1668 (it was the 9th of June) a great coach and six stood at the head of Blackfriars Wynd, and within it was Archbishop Sharpe of St. Andrews, a man heartily detested by all those who had hoped to have got rid of episcopacy for ever. The Bishop of Orkney, for whom he was waiting, soon appeared, and Sharpe leant forward to bless the people who had gathered round, more for the sake of seeing that almost unknown vehicle, a coach, than to receive the episcopal blessing. Suddenly a Presbyterian fanatic with a pistol fired at the Archbishop. He missed him, in spite of the close range, but wounded the Bishop of Orkney, who was in the act of entering the coach, with no fewer than five balls. In a moment all was commotion. The Archbishop gave orders that the Netherbow Port and all the other gates should be closed at once, and a strict search made for the assassin. But all to no purpose. Many houses in Edinburgh had secret hiding-places in those days, and many of the inhabitants would be only too ready to shelter a hero who had bravely attempted to cut off an Amalekite. It was about six years afterwards that Sharpe, seeing a man

eyeing him very narrowly, recognized his former assailant. He was seized, examined by the Privy Council, and confessed his guilt on being promised his life. Then, on being taken to the Court of Justiciary, the man, whose name was Mitchell, recanted, and not even torture would make him adhere to his confession. He was imprisoned on the Bass Rock for a couple of years, and finally, during an outburst of feeling against the Covenanters on the part of the ministry, he was brought back to Edinburgh, tried again, and executed, thereby attaining veneration as a martyr, which he little deserved.

From about the middle of the eighteenth century, until her death in 1796, Lady Lovat lived in a flat on the first floor of an old land, now done away with, at the head of the close on the west side. Her history rivals Lady Stair's in strangeness. The sister of John, Duke of Argyle and Greenwich, she was married, by force rather than inclination, to Simon, Lord Lovat, of '45 renown. Chambers, in "Traditions of Edinburgh" has it that she was staying with her sister, Lady Rosebery, at Barnbougle, when his Lordship, thirty years her senior, and unpleasant of character and countenance to boot, first paid his addresses to her. He was rejected at once, and left Barnbougle. A little while afterwards she received a letter telling her that her mother was lying dangerously ill in a lodging in the Lawnmarket, and wanted her to come at once. A carriage was got ready, and she set off for Edinburgh. The lodging mentioned was down a close, but a servant, who awaited her in the High Street, took her luggage, dismissed the carriage, and showed her up a turnpike stair into the presence of—not her mother, but Lord Lovat, who at once began making love to her. She refused him vehemently, but the crafty old man informed her that she was in a house of ill fame, and that when it was known she was there, and in his company, her reputation would be ruined. She still resisted, but after a

few days' imprisonment, resigned herself to her fate and became Lady Lovat. Whether the story is true or not, Lord Lovat was by no means incapable of such a thing.

The marriage was misery. Her husband allowed her neither proper food, proper clothes, liberty, nor communication with her friends. At last she succeeded in letting her relatives know what her life was like by means of a note hidden in a clew of yarn, and dropped out of a window. Inquiries were made, a judicial separation was obtained, and Lady Lovat retired to the flat in Blackfriars Wynd. She was one of those women who hide much real kindness and warmth under a rough and disagreeable manner. Her means were astonishingly small, £190 per annum, and for some years after her husband's execution even that was in arrears, and the amount she did with it is a striking commentary on the low cost of living at the time. She kept a waiting-maid, a cook, and a foot-boy to attend her, she was always ready to give a homely dinner to any friend who cared to come, and her kindness to her poorer neighbours was unending. For many years she gave board and lodging to a Mrs. Elphinstone, the penniless widow of the Master of Elphinstone, and the arrangement only ended with the tragedy of the poor thing being poisoned in mistake for Lady Lovat by a half-insane grandson of old Simon's, who bore her a grudge for some scolding she had given him. After that, Lady Dorothy Primrose was given half the house, and the best half too, the one looking on to the High Street, while Lady Lovat lived in the gloomy rooms with no view except the close.

Of the old house, all that remains to-day is the tirling-pin which has found its way into the Museum, but her presence is easily re-created as she emerges from some house where she has been partaking of "a dish of tea." Short, but erect, clad in a red silk gown, with lace cuffs,

a white lace-edged lawn apron over it, a white handkerchief round her neck and folded neatly over the bodice, a mob cap over her powdered hair and tied under the chin, black stockings with red clocks, and high-heeled shoes, she gets into the sedan that awaits her, and is taken back to Blackfriars Wynd.

The next entry is South Gray's Close, where a tablet on the wall of the house facing the High Street records the birth of the two Erskines, Henry, renowned in Edinburgh as an advocate and wit, and his younger brother, Thomas, who afterwards became Lord Chancellor of England.

A little way down the close, on the east side, stands St. Patrick's Roman Catholic Church. It was built in 1774, as an Episcopal chapel, and there the last supporters of Jacobitism, old ladies whose youthful dreams had been of Prince Charlie, prayed silently for the exiled King. In 1778, after news had been received of that most unhappy prince's demise, the Episcopal College met at Aberdeen, and decided that death had broken the tie which had bound them so long to the House of Stuart. From that time onwards his Hanoverian Majesty was prayed for in all the Scottish Episcopal churches, though not without a certain amount of passive resistance on the part of some members of their congregation. Long after the '45 had become but a dim memory, an old lady who went every Sunday to St. Patrick's would shut her prayer book sharply when the words "our most gracious Sovereign Lord, King George," were reached, and, rising from her knees, would stand defiantly upright until both King and royal family were finished with. A day came when her pew knew her no more, and the last protest against the usurper had been given. Jacobitism was dead.

When St. Paul's, York Place, was built, the United Secession congregation bought St. Patrick's, and finally,

in 1856, it passed into the hands of the Roman Catholics, who have it still.

The rather ugly flat-roofed house at the foot of the close belonged to Sir James Elphinstone, who built it in 1679. The ninth Earl of Argyle, who was executed for rising in favour of the Duke of Monmouth in 1685, occupied it for a while, and in the following century it was bought by Patrick Wedderburn, afterwards Lord Chesterhall. In this old house, his son, Alexander, afterwards Lord Chancellor of England and Earl of Rosslyn, passed his boyhood. Brought up to follow in his father's footsteps, his whole career was changed by a fit of temper. Having gained a case opposed by Lockhart, afterwards Lord Covington, who defended the unlucky rebel prisoners at Carlisle, the latter called him "a presumptuous boy." Young Wedderburn, firing up at once, replied with such mordant sarcasm that he was called to order by one of the judges. That was enough. Throwing off his gown then and there, he swore that he would never plead in the place again, and, going to England, he quickly rose to fame there, finally reaching the Woolsack.

A friend of that very brilliant set of ministers, Principal Robertson, Adam Ferguson, Hugh Blair, and "Jupiter" Carlyle, he was always at their service in London, and he never forgot his early days in South Gray's Close. When he visited Edinburgh for the last time, a worn-out old man, near his end, close on fifty years after the scene with Lockhart, he was carried in a sedan to the old house, and began searching for certain holes he had made in the paved courtyard, for some game he played as a boy. When he found them still there, he is said to have burst into tears as the stream of half-forgotten memories and old friends, now dead and gone, rushed into his mind.

A little farther down is Tweedale Court, where fine old ironwork gates shut in the paved court, with sedan-

chair houses, and the still handsome mansion built by Lady Yester in the first half of the seventeenth century. In her day there was a garden behind it, sloping down to the Cowgate, a grove of lime-trees and a carriage entrance which cut through the grounds to the Cowgate.

After the death of the fourth Marquis of Tweedale, in 1762, the house became the head-quarters of the British Linen Bank, and it was during their occupancy that the mysterious murder of Begbie, the Bank messenger, took place. About five o'clock in the evening of November 13, 1806, a little girl whose parents lived in Tweedale Court, was sent with a kettle to get water from the well just opposite. In the dark entry she stumbled over what she thought was a drunken man. The sentry of the guard, on duty close by, came up with a light, and the man was found to be not drunk, but dying and unable to speak, with a knife thrust into his body up to the haft. He proved to be William Begbie, the messenger, who had been to the Leith branch of the Bank and was returning to the head office with a packet of notes to the value of about £4,000. The city was searched, bad characters were had up on suspicion, but not a grain of evidence could be got, not a note could be found. The sentry had heard neither scuffle nor cry ; the murderer, whoever he was, had taken the precaution of wrapping soft paper round his hand and wrist, so that no tell-tale bloodstains should be found on him. The case created as much sensation as that of Deacon Brodie nearly twenty years earlier. In August, 1807, some men who were walking through the grounds of Bellevue (now Drummond Place) found a roll of bank-notes in a hole in an old wall. They were the greater part of the missing package, about £3,000 worth in fact. Still, no further light was thrown upon the matter, and a mystery it has remained ever since. In the darkness of that November evening, some one must have waited in a corner of the unlit court, knife

in hand, listening for the messenger's footsteps. He must have flung himself upon the unsuspecting man, stabbed him to the heart so quickly that there was neither cry nor scuffle, and, snatching the packet, have made off down one of the wynds on the north side, crossed the marshy ground where the Waverley Station now stands, and gone by farm lanes to Bellevue, where, taking only about a third of the spoil, he hid the rest in a wall, meaning to return later. Where he went, why he never returned, and who he was will never be known, though, owing to a sailor's evidence given many years later, suspicion fell on one Maxwell, who died in prison in 1820.

World's End Close, a gloomy and not particularly interesting alley, was the birthplace of William Falconer, the barber's son who wrote "The Shipwreck," a poem much admired in its day.

Just opposite is the Moray-Knox United Free Church, within the railings of which are some of the stones from the old Netherbow Port, the entrance to the city from Leith Wynd, the Canongate, and St. Mary's Wynd. Having been blown open by Hertford in 1544, and resisted many other attempts at invasion, the old turreted building with its big gate, its wicket for foot-passengers, and its spikes for decapitated heads, was ruthlessly pulled down by order of the Town Council in 1764. The clock which surmounted it now adorns "the beautiful Tuscan edifice, built for the orphans near the Dean Cemetery," as Grant tells us.

The two streets running north and south form the boundary between the High Street and Canongate, and therefore make a convenient place for bringing the chronicles of the former to a close.

CHAPTER VI

THE CANONGATE

WHEN David I gave a charter to the Augustinian monks of Holyrood in 1128 he empowered them to build, and rule as a burgh of regality, a village between Edinburgh and the Abbey. In due course a long straggling row of huts and houses arose beside the rough track which led from the town to Holyrood. As this track was used chiefly by the monks or canons, and their numerous lay dependents, it received the name of the Canon-gate (" gate " being used in its original sense of " way "). When the canons departed at the Reformation the name remained, and the Canongate, becoming the court end of the town as the other was the legal and commercial, was a fashionable suburb right down to the time of the building of the New Town, when the last of its well-to-do residents deserted its narrow wynds for the spacious dwellings across the North Bridge.

St. Mary's Street, just below the Netherbow, leading down to the Cowgate on the right, is the modern version of the old St. Mary's Wynd, which took its name from a nunnery dedicated to St. Mary of Placentia, and was one of the principal entrances to the town from the south, while its northern continuation, Leith Wynd, was the main road down to the port. Nothing ancient is left in it now except memories.

It was to Cuthbert Ramsay's house in St. Mary's Wynd that Bothwell went one night in 1562, accom-

panied by the Marquis d'Elbœuf, Lord John of Coldinghame, and other riotous spirits, in search of Alison Craig, a well-known courtesan, who was then under the protection of the Earl of Arran. The usual " tulzie " ensued : swords were drawn, alarm bells rang, and the burghers hurried out to join in the fray on whichever side suited them, till Murray and Huntly marched up from Holyrood at the Queen's orders, with a strong guard, and put the revellers to flight.

As this was a main street, it contained two inns in the eighteenth century, Peter Ramsay's on the east side, with stabling for a hundred horses and twenty carriages, and Boyd's Inn, the White Horse, near-by, where, as we saw in Chapter II, Dr. Johnson put up on his way to the Hebrides.

Leith Wynd has now disappeared into the modern Jeffrey Street, and we can pass on to Morocco Close with its curious old figure of a Moor attired lightly in turban and necklace. Various legends are attached to the big, square land at the close-head, but the following is the favourite, and the most circumstantial. In the course of the riots and disturbances which followed the coronation of Charles I in 1633, the Provost, who was very unpopular, had his house set on fire. The ringleader of the rioters, Andrew Gray, a student at the University, and younger son of the Master of Gray, was captured, and, in spite of all his friends and family could do, was sentenced to death. On the night before his execution, even while the scaffold was being erected at the Cross, Gray, with the help of a friend who gave drugged liquor to the sentinel at the Tolbooth door, succeeded in making his escape out of the jail, down one of the closes to the edge of the Nor' Loch, where a boat was waiting to take him across to the other side, then to Leith, and so away by sea, where he was lost to sight of friend and foe alike.

A dozen years later, in 1645, Edinburgh was ravaged

by the plague. Grass grew about the Cross, the Canongate was desolate, and the terror of the invisible death that lurked in the narrow wynds and closes lay heavy on rich and poor alike. Just when the visitation was at its height an armed vessel, of a rig unknown to the fisherfolk, appeared in the Firth of Forth and dropped anchor in Leith Roads. Some old seamen declared her to be an Algerian pirate, such as worked havoc along the Mediterranean coasts. When boats were lowered and a strong party of armed men, led by a powerful-looking Moor, landed at Leith Shore, their suspicions were verified. Coming up the Canongate, and reaching the Netherbow Port, they demanded admittance. The Provost and magistrates asked for a parley, but as the decimated city could only supply a mere handful of soldiers, defence was out of the question, and they had to accede to the Moor's demand for a heavy ransom for the city. The Provost, Sir John Smith, was requested to hand over his eldest son as a guarantee of good faith, but he explained that his only child was a daughter, and that she was at that moment desperately ill with the plague, which had just carried off her cousin Egidia Gray.

At this the Moor's manner changed, and, telling the unhappy Provost that he possessed an elixir of marvellous potency, he offered to cure the daughter, or, if he failed to do that, to go away without demanding any ransom of the city. After some further discussion his offer was accepted, and, as he refused to enter the city gates, the Provost's daughter was taken to a house at the head of the Canongate. The Moor was as good as his word, for she was cured, and, needless to say, it was soon known that the pirate was none other than Andrew Gray, who, after a wild career in the Near East, was returning to be revenged upon his native town for the very severe sentence passed upon him years before, when he realized that the Provost he

intended to persecute was a distant connection of his own.

Needless to say, also, he fell in love with his patient, married her, and lived happily ever afterwards in Morocco Close, over the entrance to which he put up an effigy of his former friend and patron, the Emperor of Morocco. Tradition also has it that in all the years he lived there he never entered the Netherbow Port, having vowed in his youthful days that he would only do so sword in hand.

As to the truth of the story, who can tell? The effigy is certainly there: there was certainly a bad outbreak of plague in 1645, and Sir John Smith, a brother-in-law of Sir William Gray of Pettendrum, was certainly Provost of Edinburgh at that time, and there the story must rest.

On the opposite side of the street is Chessel's Court, the scene of Deacon Brodie's last exploit, which has been described already. The house on the south side of the court was the Excise Office, and it is easy to picture the scene with the nervous Ainslie waiting in the dark loneliness outside, and the Deacon just inside the door in the hall. Behind the house is a garden, which, though the buildings on the "south back" of the Canongate have cut off a considerable part of it, shows that this mansion in the Canongate was no mean dwelling in former days.

Chessel's Court, or rather the street in front of it, was the scene of the last of those "tulzies" which, in earlier times, had frequently dyed red the water that ran down the gutters. This was in 1758. The Duke of Hamilton, who was in Edinburgh, had been at the theatre at Playhouse Close, and at the end of the performance was strolling leisurely up the Canongate when suddenly two men with drawn swords sprang out upon him from the darkness of Chessel's Court. The Duke drew too, and a spectator, recognizing him, went

to his help, declaring that he would stand by him "richt or wrang." All other spectators gathered round in a ring, and, now that the numbers were equal, felt themselves free to enjoy the pleasures of good fencing. However, after some minutes, a detachment of the City Guard appeared, and, scattering the crowd before them, took all the combatants into custody. Such was the very tame ending to the last successor of the "Cleanse the Causeway" in the great days of Douglas and Hamilton.

On the same side of the street are the Playhouse and Old Playhouse Closes, with their reminiscences of Home's "Douglas" and the first Canongate Theatre. After the departure of the Duke of York from Holyrood in 1682, any form of theatrical performance fell under the ban of the clergy and the Town Council. Allan Ramsay, as we have seen, failed to get his playhouse in Carrubber's Close licensed, and in the first half of the century Edinburgh knew nothing of drama except such as was supplied to them by the few travelling companies that gave representations for a few nights in the Tailors' Hall in the Cowgate. It was in 1747 that the Canongate Theatre, with its entrance in Old Playhouse Close, was opened. Despite the wrath of the clergy, it continued to flourish until, with the building of the New Town, it was removed to Shakespeare Square, where the General Post Office now stands.

In 1749 it was the scene of one of those brawls such as the soul of the Scotsman loved. It was the anniversary of Culloden, and some officers who were in the theatre, forgetting their manners as well as discretion, ordered the orchestra to play a well-known air called "Culloden." Instead of that, they struck up with the equally well-known "You're welcome, Charlie Stuart," whereupon the officers attacked the musicians with their swords. In a trice the audience joined in. Fiddles, flutes, benches, stools, anything that came handy in

OLD PLAYHOUSE CLOSE

fact, formed the weapons, and there was a glorious mêlée. Then the chairmen, Highlanders to a man, hearing what was the cause of the tumult, seized the poles of their sedans, rushed into the theatre and attacked the obnoxious officers in the rear with such vigour that the latter were forced to fly ignominiously with broken swords, torn uniforms, and bruises enough to remind them of their defeat for some time. Culloden was avenged, but it was thought wise to put up bills notifying that in future the orchestra would only play such music as was selected by the management.

But the excitement over "Culloden" was as nothing compared to what arose over "Douglas." John Home, a minister of the kirk, wrote a play, and it was to be produced in the Canongate Theatre on December 14, 1756. His great friend Alexander Carlyle, minister of Inveresk, had not only encouraged Home in his wickedness, but, it was rumoured, had even taken a part at one of the rehearsals in company with professional actors, who it was well known were servants of Satan, every one of them! Here was material enough for a whole winter of excitement, and all the younger generation, heartily sick of the deadly dullness of Presbyterian rule, hailed the new play with acclamation.

On the eventful evening the house was packed; all the *literati* were present, most of the judges gave it their countenance, and some of the clergy ventured to attend, including the valiant and broadminded Carlyle. "The applause was enthusiastic, but a better criticism of its merits was the tears of the audience which the tender part of the drama drew forth unsparingly." Although the only tears that "Douglas" is likely to bring forth to-day are those of boredom, its reputation as a classic was made that night, and every child for the next fifty years learnt to declaim "My name is Norval" with all the requisite expression and gestures. The moment the play was produced down came the

thunders of the Church. The Synod of Haddington, under whose jurisdiction Home fell, as minister of Athelstaneford in East Lothian, was shaken to its very foundations, but John merely snapped his fingers in their faces, and, resigning his living, departed to London just as they hoped to have the pleasure of prosecuting him. The Presbytery of Edinburgh flung suspensions and threats of suspension in all directions upon those who had dared to be present at the play. They published a splendid address denouncing all those, lay as well as clerical, who entered " the Temple of the Father of Lies," and ordained that it should be read in all churches within their bounds, but the great days of the tyranny of the kirk were over, and the net result of their anathemas appears to have been little or nothing. At any rate the Canongate Playhouse found itself more firmly established than ever.

New Street, on the north side of the Canongate, has fared badly at the hands of Time, aided by the North British Railway and the Corporation gasworks. It was made at a time when improvements were talked of, as a possible alternative to the North Bridge which sounded so obnoxious to the old-fashioned, who had no wish to leave the stuffy and highly insanitary comfort of the Royal Mile. Take a few steps down the street, and you see on the east side a dingy, bedraggled old house, with a flight of steps leading up to a doorway which still shows crumbling decorations, giving evidence that its past was happier than its present. Time has added to its insults by planting a lofty and ugly tenement within a few yards of the front windows, and there the old house stands, dismal and decayed, awaiting the *coup de grâce* it will one day receive at the builders' hands. It must have been somewhere about the year 1760, when the stonework was clean, and the front gate opened upon a strip of garden, that visitors were taken to admire its size and its beauty, and were told

at the same time that it was the town house of Lord Kames, one of the most celebrated judges of his time.

Henry Home, Lord Kames, was one of those curious legal characters of which eighteenth-century Edinburgh grew such a large crop. Coarse to a degree in many ways, he was the hero of the famous story of Matthew Hay's trial for murder at Ayr in 1780. He knew the prisoner well, having often played chess with him on happier occasions, and after pronouncing the death sentence with its solemn and sonorous "To be hanged by the neck until you are dead; and may the Lord have mercy upon your unhappy soul," he added with a chuckle—"And now, Matthew, my man, that's checkmate to you." And yet the same man, wanting to quote a poem by an unknown writer as an illustration to some point of criticism, wrote to Mr. Creech, the bookseller, to ask if the author were dead, for, as the criticism was unfavourable, he would not like to pain a living man by making use of it.

He was a hard drinker, a hard worker, a great supporter of better education for women, and a great frequenter of assemblies and theatres. With the help of Ramsay of Ochtertyre we can get a very good idea of what Lord Kames's life was like when he lived in New Street. All through the winter he would be up two hours before daybreak preparing for the business of the Courts, which began at nine. Soon after midday he left the Bench and usually walked for a couple of hours, either in the meadows or in the open country to the north of the town. Then came dinner, probably about 3 o'clock, after which he went to his study, "put on his nightgown and velvet cap," saw his clerk, and studied the next day's business. After that the day was his own to sup with friends or at the tavern, to play whist, at which he was very keen and touchy, or to pay his respects to Miss Nicky Murray and her fair charges in Bell's Wynd. It was not a bad day's

work for an old man, and he was able to keep up the greater part of it until his death in 1782, at the age of eighty-seven.

A near neighbour of his, on the west side of the street, was his fellow-judge, Sir David Dalrymple, whose reputation as jurist and historian was great enough to command Johnson's respect. Entirely different from Lord Kames in character, he was precise, careful in his utterance, refined, and a student before everything. "He lives the life of a bug," growled old Monboddo* contemptuously, for Lord Hailes was wont to spend all the time not taken up by the Courts, in his study, and even when driving in from his country place, Newhailes, he either read or told his clerk to read to him. Another dweller in one of the vanished New Street houses was Miss Christian Ramsay, daughter of the first Allan, the poet, and sister of the painter. She is chiefly renowned for a pleasant trait, rather unusual in those rough days—a love of animals. Every stray cat was sure of food at her house, and the name of her pets was Legion. The wretched cart-horses that brought the coal from Gilmerton and that neighbourhood were great objects of pity to her. Again and again she would send her maid into the street with a penny roll for some jaded, half-starved animal, and never knew, let us hope, that the carters generally kept her bounty for themselves.

Leaving New Street, the next entries on the north side are Little Jack's Close and Big Jack's Close. Between the two, in Big Jack's Land, Susannah, Countess of Eglinton, passed the later years of her life, after leaving Stamp Office Close. Tradition has it that she amused herself by taming rats, and succeeded so well that they would come out of their holes under the floor, where they abounded in the old lands, when called at meal times.

* See page 87.

The same land housed David Hume for some years after his departure from Riddle's Close in 1762. Alexander Carlyle, who loved him in spite of his opinions, speaks of the frugal but very cheery suppers the philosopher used to give in his Canongate rooms or in a tavern nearby. Many a joyous evening was passed when "we dined as we best could, and by caddies assembled our friends to meet us in a tavern by nine o'clock; and a fine time it was when we could collect David Hume, Adam Smith, Adam Ferguson, Lord Elibank and Doctors Blair and Jardine on an hour's warning."

Until a few years ago Big Jack's Close contained the last remains of the town mansion of old Dalziel of Binns, the commander-in-chief of the Scottish forces, the hated and dreaded of the Covenanters. From the day of Charles I's execution he let his beard remain uncut, and in 1681 he raised the Scots Greys, riding at their head, putting down Conventicles, and chasing preachers and preached-at alike with a zest that the latter attributed to direct communication with the Evil One. But to get a vivid description of Dalziel it is necessary to turn the pages of "Old Mortality," with which advice we will pass on to St. John's Street, on the opposite side of the Canongate, where much that is interesting awaits our arrival.

A little west of the entrance to St. John's Street is the site of the old St. John's Cross, marked by a circle of stones. Here it was that Charles I knighted the Lord Provost, when he came to Edinburgh for his coronation in 1633. The actual Cross has long since disappeared.

The entrance to St. John's Street is through an archway, or in Scottish parlance a "pend," above which towers a massive land, of eighteenth-century construction and somewhat mediæval appearance. Inside the archway on the west side is the usual turnpike stair, and up the stair, on the first floor over the arch, dwelt

Mrs. Telfer, the sister of Tobias Smollett. Here it was that the novelist stayed in 1766, when one result of his visit was the "Scotch" portion of "Humphry Clinker." For the benefit of Smollett's readers, Chambers explains in his "Traditions of Edinburgh" that the sensible Matthew Bramble was the author himself, but denies that the maddening Miss Tabitha was intended for a caricature of Mrs. Smollett, and let us hope, for the sake of Tobias, that Chambers is right. Jerry Melford was his nephew Major Telfer, and the sentimental Liddy, his own daughter, who, it was hoped, would marry the Major, but she died young, before the match was brought about.

Smollett was in bad health at the time of this visit, and being depressed and anxious about himself, did not show to the best advantage. "Jupiter" Carlyle, who had known him before, describes him as a very pleasant man, of good manners and a keen sense of humour. His scholarship was not great, but his faculty of probing the follies and absurdities of those he met and holding them up to ridicule, gave him a piquantly philosophic mind, though it made him a dangerous acquaintance as well.

Like New Street, this was an attempt to give air, space and self-contained houses within the confined quarters of the Old Town. It was built in the seventeen-sixties, and continued to be a fashionable place of residence even when the lofty "lands" had been deserted for the greater attractions of the New Town.

At No. 8 lived a judicial oddity, Lord Eskgrove by name. The oft-quoted description given by Cockburn brings the man before our eyes. "His face varied, according to circumstances, from a scurfy red to a scurfy blue; the nose was prodigious; the under-lip enormous, and supported on a huge clumsy chin, which moved like the jaw of an exaggerated Dutch toy. . . . The voice was low and mumbling, and on the bench

ST. JOHN STREET

was generally inaudible for some time after the movement of the lips showed that he had begun speaking." His great joy in life appears to have been "charging" the jury. With his victims standing before him he would begin—an hour would pass, and the wretched jury were still there listening to Eskgrove's mumbling voice, which only became clear if he caught sight of one of them attempting to sit down, when he would reprimand him sharply for disrespect to his Majesty's judges and the law of the land. Cockburn tells of more than one occasion when, having left Eskdale in full career, he would come back hours later to an empty court, guttering candles, and a row of faint, despairing jurymen, still standing in front of the merciless Eskdale, who had not yet finished "charging."

With all his peculiarities, he was "a man of high ability and strict integrity," and also gave much pleasure to the younger barristers, notably Walter Scott, who found a good imitation of "Esky," a splendid help in passing the weary, vacant hours in the Parliament House. In 1804 he died, not at the hands of a band of associated jurymen, but peacefully and quietly of old age, and the Bench knew him no more.

Another legal oddity of quite a different type was Lord Monboddo, who lived at No. 13, a house now pulled down. Looking like a wizened old stuffed monkey, Lord Monboddo had a passion, and that passion was for the "Ancients." The Greeks were the models for every man to copy, and their ways were his ways. At his supper parties his guests sat down to a flower-strewn table and poured their wine from bottles garlanded with roses, while conversation ran on subjects of high philosophy. One of Monboddo's peculiarities, which was a constant source of surprise to his friends, was his insistence upon a cold bath every morning, not for reasons of personal cleanliness, which were but little thought of at that time, but because it was the

custom among the Greeks. His nightly régime was an air-bath at an open window (which must have needed some courage in such a climate), followed by an anointing of his person with a lotion of his own, composed of rose-water, olive-oil, saline, aromatic spirit, and Venetian soap!

Another of his peculiarities was his persistent refusal to use a carriage. The degradation of being dragged at a horse's tail, instead of being carried like a god on its back, was insupportable. Every one of his annual visits to London was made on horseback. He was over eighty when he turned his favourite horse, Alburac, towards the London road for the last time. The first few stages of the journey passed off all right, but poor old Monboddo was no longer the man he once was. He was taken ill at a roadside inn and realized that he must return, that the journey was too much for him. A friend, who was going north by carriage, persuaded him to let a servant ride Alburac, and travel in the chaise himself. For one day the old man bore up, but his misery was great, and the following morning found him mounted on his faithful steed once more in spite of all remonstrances. Air-baths and Attic graces suited his constitution, for it was not until 1799 that a sudden attack of illness carried him off at the age of eighty-five.

At No. 10 we make the acquaintance of James Ballantyne, whose abounding self-esteem, utter inaptitude, and somewhat crooked dealings were the ruin of Scott in 1825. The whole story is too familiar to be told here, and we will only pause to have a look at the old house at one of its happiest times—the occasion of a "Waverley" dinner, when a new novel by the "Great Unknown" was about to appear. Scott, Lockhart, and a number of intimates formed the party. After the departure of the ladies Ballantyne always filled a bumper to "the immortal Author of 'Waverley,'"

which was drunk with much cheering, while not a muscle of Scott's face would move to give the secret away. Another bumper was drained when the name of the new book was announced, and later in the evening, Scott and the older members of the party having left, a few choice spirits would remain on to brew a mighty bowl of punch, and persuade the publisher to read some passages from the forthcoming book. Flatly refusing at first, James always let himself be persuaded into acquiescence, and one can see, in imagination, into the dingy old dining-room, bright then with wax candles and firelight, where Ballantyne, in rather pompous tones, reads Jeanie Deans' interview with the Queen, while Lockhart and the others listen in silent attention.

Now let us leave St. John's Street, and, after a glance at the old tablet, with St. Crispin's crown and a rounding knife, which surmounts the entry to Shoemaker's Close, we return to the south side to have a look at Moray House, with its stone balcony outside, and its beautiful ceilings within.

The architect who built it in 1623 for the Countess of Home had more idea of comfort than most of his fellows, whose thoughts seemed to have turned chiefly upon " tulzies " and means of defence, and there is an attraction in its large gateway and good-sized windows, quite different from that of the grim " lands " higher up the street. In 1648 Cromwell lodged here, and tradition tells us that he consulted with the Covenanting leaders in this house, as to " the necessitie to take away the King's life," and other such dark matters of intrigue.

The great drama of Moray House, however, took place in May, 1650, when Lord Lorne, the son of Argyle, was married to Lord Moray's daughter. Outside, the crowd awaited the coming of Montrose, a prisoner, who, by Argyle's order, was to run the gauntlet of the hostile

crowd through the whole length of the city. Among the waiting spectators moved the ministers, whose teaching that day was all of hatred, encouraging their flocks to fling mud and stones at the helpless prisoner. At last the procession entered by the Water Gate. First came the troops followed by a number of minor prisoners who merely swelled the triumph, then, seated high on a hurdle, drawn by a single horse, Montrose himself with hands tied so that he could not shield his face, and the executioner behind him. Amid storms of abuse from the ministers and their followers, he passed up the street, but many of the common people, who had come with stones, forebore to use them, and turned shamefacedly away. Opposite Moray House the procession halted, and out on to the balcony stepped the wedding party. There was Argyle himself, who never dared to face Montrose sword in hand; there was his lady and the Countess of Haddington; the newly-married couple too, and Johnston of Warriston, the slippery politician. For a moment the two parties gazed at each other—then Lady Argyle bent forward and spat in Montrose's face. There was an exclamation of disgust from some one in the crowd below, more daring than the rest, and even Argyle shrank back. The procession moved on again, the wedding party gazed after it, talking and laughing and then returned to the festivities. In the course of years, so it was ordained, Argyle, his son, and Johnston of Warriston as well, were to share Montrose's fate.

A little more than half a century passed, and Moray House was the centre of intrigue once more. Lord Seafield, Lord High Chancellor, was in residence here, and countless meetings and secret interviews to settle the price of votes (Lord Seafield got £490 for his) must have taken place within its walls. When the Union was all arranged the document was placed for signature in a stone summer-house (now pulled down) at the end

of the garden, while outside the shouts of an angry mob warned the Commissioners that their situation was none of the safest. Half the signatures were appended in the obscurity of a cellar under a house near the North Bridge, and the moment the list was completed the Duke of Queensberry, the Lord High Commissioner, gathered up the papers and fled to London, accompanied by his fellow-commissioners, all of whom were in deadly terror of being torn to pieces by the enraged mob.

Close to Moray House is Huntly House, the beautiful three-gabled timber-fronted residence of the Marquises of Huntly, quite the finest of the sixteenth-century houses that survive in Edinburgh. This was the town house of George Gordon, the second Marquis, who stoutly refused to sign the Covenant, swearing that they might take his head from his shoulders before they took his heart from his king. He kept his word too, and died bravely for the cause on the scaffold at the Market Cross ten years later.

In Bakehouse Close is another fine old house on the east side, with a doorway surmounted by a crest—a cock standing on a trumpet. This house, built in 1633, was owned by Sir Archibald Acheson, Solicitor-General and Secretary of State, whose initials, S. A. A., and those of his wife, Dame Margaret Hamilton, D. M. H., are still to be seen.

On the opposite side of the street is the Canongate Tolbooth, a beautiful building with much French influence in its architecture, in which the business of the burgh was transacted, and its prisoners were shut up, before the Canongate was finally merged into Edinburgh.

Next to it comes the Canongate Church, plain and rather sombre, built on Dutch lines, but none the less picturesque. When James VII renewed the Order of the Thistle in 1687, he had the chapel royal at Holy-

rood fitted up splendidly for them, and the Presbyterian Canongate, which had made use of it for many years past, had to go elsewhere, with wrath in their hearts. Thanks to a bequest from one Thomas Moodie, a rich citizen, they were able to build this church, around which many Edinburgh notables are buried. East of the entrance gate are the graves of George Drummond, six times Lord Provost, who laid the foundation-stone of the North Bridge; Adam Smith, author of the "Wealth of Nations"; Dr. James Gregory, of "powder" fame; Runciman, the painter; Robert Ferguson, the poet, whose tombstone was put up by Burns' order; and Dugald Stewart, the famous philosopher. On the west side the two Ballantynes are buried, John, who died in 1821, at whose funeral Scott whispered to Lockhart, "I feel as if there would be less sunshine for me from this day forth," and James, who lived on till 1833. "Grecian Williams" and Sir John Watson Gordon, landscape artist and portrait painter respectively, lie here, and so does Mrs. Maclehose, celebrated as the "Clarinda" of Burns.

A little below the church, on the same side of the street, is Panmure Close, recalling the days when the Earls of Panmure had their town house there, but its chief title to fame arises from the fact, as recorded on the tablet, that Adam Smith lived here for twelve years, from 1778 until his death in 1790, to be exact. The famous author of "The Wealth of Nations" lived in a world of his own, and a pleasant world he must have found it too, for his friend Alexander Carlyle describes how he would often forget entirely where he was, or who he was with, "moving his lips, talking to himself, and smiling in the midst of large companies," a habit rather disconcerting to those who did not know him well.

Another interesting old building on the same side of the street is the house numbered 81, generally known as "Golfer's Land." In its history we catch one of

the few glimpses of James, Duke of York, afterwards James VII, in pleasant mood. During his stay at Holyrood he grew very fond of golf, and often went down to Leith Links to play, as his father, Charles I, had done before him. On one occasion a discussion arose between his English and Scottish followers as to whether the game really belonged to England or Scotland. Coming to no conclusion on the subject, two of the former party suggested that it should be settled by a match, the Duke and any Scotch partner he cared to choose upholding Scotland, while they would play for England. The proposition was agreed to, a large sum of money was laid on the winner, and the Duke began to look for a partner. Hearing that a shoemaker, John Patersone by name, was considered the best golfer in Edinburgh, James declared that he should be his partner. Patersone was by no means keen on such an honour, and, moreover, was probably rather apprehensive of the consequences to himself if he played badly. However, James insisted, and off they set for Leith Links, the Duke and the shoemaker, the two Englishmen, and the whole Court following to see the result of the match.

Patersone evidently played well, for he and his royal partner were victorious. The shoemaker was given half the stakes for a reward, and at once built himself a comfortable dwelling in the Canongate, which James had decorated with a stone tablet bearing a Latin inscription by Dr. Pitcairn, the Patersone coat of arms, a crest of a hand grasping a golf-club, and a motto, "I hate no person," which is an anagram on the name "John Patersone."

Nearly two centuries and a half have gone by since the lucky shoemaker first surveyed his new house, and the gilding has long since disappeared from the tablet, but though rather defaced by time and weather, it is still to be seen let into the wall at the second flat,

a curious memento of a Stuart who left but few pleasant memories behind him.

A little farther down the street, beyond Strathie's Close, are Haddington's Entry and Reid's Close, reached through the same archway. At the close-head is the usual tall land, but this particular one is distinguished by a square turret, projecting well out over the pavement. Here lived Sir John Nisbet of Dirleton, a scion of a well-known East Lothian family. Burnet speaks of him as a man of the greatest integrity, but Wodrow, the compiler of the "Analecta," is not flattering. Sir John was as hot against Covenanters as his successor, Sir George Mackenzie, and Wodrow declares that he made use of the following mean trick to get information. One Robert Gray, suspected of knowing a considerable amount about the Covenanters' hiding-places, was examined before the Privy Council, but would reveal nothing. Dirleton, noticing a ring on the prisoner's finger, had it taken off, and sent it to Mrs. Gray with a message to say that her husband had revealed all he knew. Deceived by this, the poor woman when she was questioned in her turn, answered freely, and thereby gave Dirleton information enough to lay hands upon many of the "wanted" Whigs. Wodrow further adds that Gray was heartbroken at hearing what happened and died soon afterwards.

The entry to Nisbet's house is inside the close, a most picturesque place, well worth seeing. On the west side, going down towards Arthur's Seat, stands a self-contained eighteenth-century house supposed to have been the dwelling of the Earls of Aberdeen, and on the east is another old building, the town house of the Earls of Haddington.

Returning to the Canongate, we pass Vallence's Entry and come to the huge barrack-like house in its own grounds, now a Home of Refuge for the Destitute, which once housed the Dukes and Duchesses of Queens-

berry. When the second Duke, the Lord High Commissioner at the time of the Union, lived here, there was much coming and going, much mystery and much state kept up. Among the many grim stories that residents in the Canongate told each other over the fire, when the wind whistled through the unglazed windows of the turnpikes, there was none more horrible than that of the Duke's eldest son, the hugely tall and powerful imbecile, whom no one ever saw except the keepers who looked after him in a ground-floor room with boarded windows in the west wing of the house. On the day the Act of Union was passed all the Queensberry household crowded up the street towards the Parliament House to see what was happening, and the son's attendants went with the others. Breaking out of his room the madman began wandering through the empty house and at last came to the kitchen, where one small boy, a turnspit, was seated by the fire. In a moment he seized the lad, killed him, and putting him on the spit, roasted him in front of the fire, where he was found when the Duke and his household returned home in triumph.

To turn to pleasanter subjects, Duke James was succeeded by his younger son Charles, the husband of the famous "Kitty of Queensberry." From time to time they took up their residence in the Canongate, and it was in the course of one of these visits that Gay saw Edinburgh and got so much amusement from it. Unluckily "Prior's Kitty" was no favourite in Edinburgh. She could not abide its dullness after the pleasures of London, and she could not abide the rather uncouth manners of the Scotch of that day. When she saw her guests making a knife do the usual work of a fork, she screamed out in mock dismay that they were going to cut their throats. When the stately dames called on her in dresses stiff with the frills and embroideries of Court ceremonial a generation or

two earlier, and manners as stiff as their clothes, they would find her Grace attired like a peasant in homespun. They could not understand her and she could not understand them, and at that the matter had better be left!

Among other occupants of Queensberry House were, at one time, the Earl of Stair who married Viscount Primrose's widow, as has been related before, and the Duke of Douglas, brother of Lady Jane, whose death here, in 1761, brought the great "Douglas Cause" to a head. After Duke Charles's death in 1778 the gardens were let to a market-gardener, who allowed people to come in, on payment of sixpence, and eat gooseberries during the season, as many as they liked, provided they "pouched nane." "Old Q." was the last Queensberry to inherit the place, and though he never lived in it himself, it was during his lifetime that the Canongate saw the last flicker of its ancient glory. Sir James Montgomery, the Lord Chief Baron, took Queensberry House in 1784, and until his death his neighbours were able to feast their eyes on his splendid state coach with postilions and running footmen, in which he drove to the Courts every morning, the last equipage of the kind that came out of a Canongate stable.

Nearly opposite Queensberry House is Callender's Entry, where stood Janet Hall's alehouse, a noted tavern in the middle of the eighteenth century, to which Gay used to go, when his duties as secretary to Duchess Kitty were done, and pass the evening with Allan Ramsay and the other wits of the time.

Whiteford House, the big modern building farther down the Canongate, occupies the site of "My Lord Seton's Lodging," which will be recalled at once by all readers of "The Abbot."

Passing on to Whitehorse Close, our feet are on Scott's own particular ground once more, for it was here that Prince Charlie's officers were quartered in 1745, as described in "Waverley." This old close has now

been restored, and the house on the north side gives a very fair idea of what a Scottish inn was like, for the White Horse (which must not be confused with Boyd's White Horse in St. Mary's Wynd) was one of the best known inns in the country in the eighteenth century. The accommodation at its best was bad, and travellers, after a night of misery, generally looked for apartments elsewhere. The London coaches started from the White Horse yard in days gone by, and remains of the old stables and coach-houses can still be seen in the Calton Road, which forms the " north back " of the Canongate.

CHAPTER VII

HOLYROOD

LEAVING the Canongate we come to the Abbey Strand. In the middle of the street a brass "S" is inserted in the paving, marking the bounds of the sanctuary, the right which lasted for over seven centuries, from David I's grant of a charter to the Abbey in the middle of the twelfth century, right down to the year 1881, when imprisonment for debt was abolished: debt being the only offence for which sanctuary was permitted in more modern times. On the south of the Strand is the Horse Wynd, probably an entrance to the Royal Mews in former days, and on the north is Thomson's Court, where many a debtor must have found lodging in the eighteenth century and later. Close to the new ironwork gates, the wall of the building on the right shows traces of the arches belonging to a very fine Gothic gateway, the principal entrance to the courtyard in former days, which was pulled down, apparently for no particular reason, by the Keeper of the Palace in 1753.

It is needless to say that Holyrood is overshadowed by the tragedy of Queen Mary. That will always be the case, but much water flowed under the bridge both before and after her day and we will try to recall some of the events, joyous as well as sad, which are less well remembered than the interviews with John Knox and the murder of Rizzio.

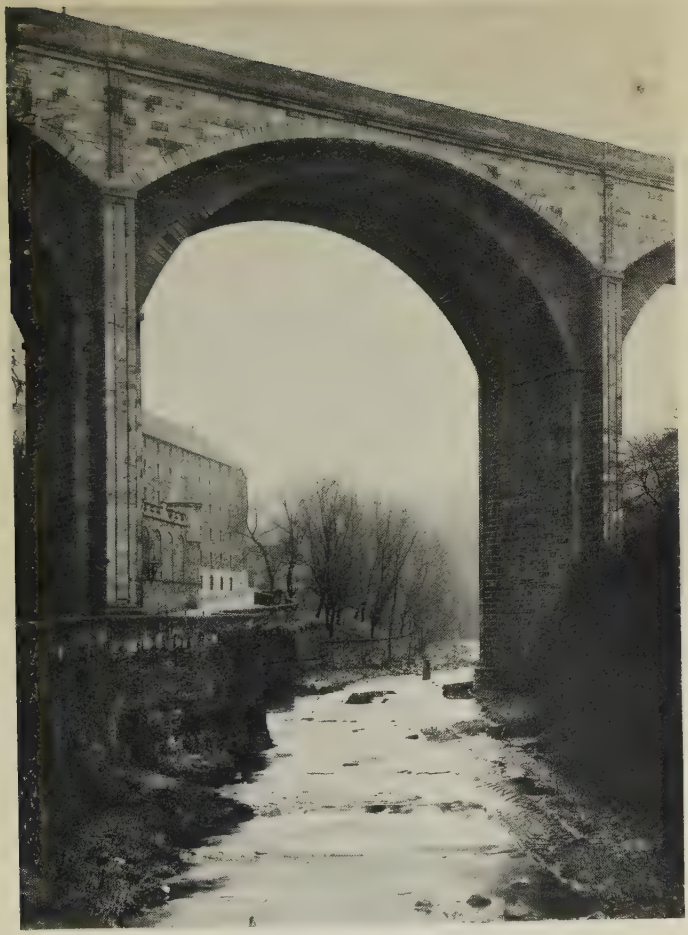
In consequence of the wondrous vision David I had while hunting, the Abbey was begun in a clearing made in the great forest of Drumselch about the year 1128, and a party of Augustinian Canons were brought over from St. Andrews as soon as the church was ready for use, though for many years, until about 1176, they lodged at the Castle and walked daily to the Abbey down the path which soon became known to the people as the Canongate. Being richly endowed by David, their lives seem to have been passed placidly and uneventfully enough at first. Besides carrying out their religious duties they probably cultivated their garden, nursed the sick of the neighbourhood, gave food and shelter to travellers, lodged the King when he was on hunting expeditions, and made a small oasis of civilization and peaceful learning in an otherwise barbarous age. Their church was far larger than the present building, which only represents the nave, and its outlines have been marked out in the garden beyond. Around it would have been the cloisters and the usual buildings of the monastery, including a lodging good enough for the King, though as yet there was no thought of a palace.

Although their sacred office was still sufficient to keep the canons and their Abbey from serious harm during the earlier English occupations of Edinburgh, a certain amount of excitement was brought into their lives by it. In 1337 the sacristan was aroused one day by the violent ringing of the sanctuary bell, and, on hurrying to open the door, in came a man, panting and blood-stained, who staggered up the church and dropped on his knees at the high altar (which stood, not at the present east end, but much farther on, at the spot marked in the garden). Close behind him followed a band of angry English soldiers, who said that the man was Robert Prendergast, a Scot, who had just slain their Marshal, Thomas Knyton (then holding the Castle

for Edward III) and three of his men. They dared not violate the sanctuary, but they were determined he should not escape, so, sending for more men from the Castle, they posted sentries all round, who would allow no food or drink to be given to the fugitive. However, the sacristan and his brethren cared naught for the murder of four Englishmen, and took Prendergast's part. There was an aperture in the roof just over the altar, and through that they lowered sufficient food to keep the man alive. For twelve long days and nights the monks who flocked into the Abbey for their services saw the candles flickering upon the fugitive in front of the altar, and the circle of grim watchers beyond the sanctuary. At last the sacristan lowered a rope through the hole. Prendergast seized it, was drawn up through the roof, hastily dressed in the frock and cowl of a canon, and so disguised was able to make his escape.

In 1381 there was considerable stir about the Abbey, for a distinguished guest was expected. John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, was coming to Edinburgh, ostensibly to negotiate peace on his nephew Richard II's behalf, but really to absent himself from England for a while, as his unpopularity in that country was great just then, and Robert II had given orders that he should be lodged at Holyrood. Negotiations were prolonged, and John of Gaunt was well pleased with the courtesy and hospitality of the canons, whose treatment of him stood them in good stead, for when, some years later, he accompanied Richard II on the ungrateful errand of burning Edinburgh, Holyrood was spared at his request, though St. Giles's, the town, and all the monasteries round about were gutted with fire.

Hitherto royalty had only resided very occasionally at Holyrood, but when James I returned from his long captivity in England, with his newly-married Queen, Joan of Beaufort, he lodged there frequently. Thus it



THE VALLEY OF THE WATER OF LEITH, BELOW DEAN VILLAGE

was that those who were in the Abbey on St. Augustine's Day, 1429, saw a strange and impressive sight. A great service was in progress, at which the King, Queen and Court were present, for this was the feast day of the Holyrood monks' patron saint. Suddenly the festal chant was interrupted by the abrupt opening of the west door, and all eyes were turned upon a wild-looking figure, clad only in a shirt, which walked straight up the aisle, holding a naked sword by the point, and, dropping on one knee before the King, sitting within the altar rails, offered him the hilt. It was Alastair, the rebel Lord of the Isles, who, hopelessly defeated at Lochaber, had brought himself at last to make humble submission to the King. There was little more attention paid to the service after this, for all wished to know whether James would accept the humiliation of the Highland chief as sufficient punishment. He did; although the Lord of the Isles was put into honourable confinement at Tantallon for some time, he was afterwards restored to both lands and titles.

In 1435 Holyrood held festival for a visitor of importance from Rome, Æneas Sylvius Piccolomini, afterwards Pope Pius II, who came to James at the Abbey on a secret mission. To the cultured man of letters Scotland appeared to be a most barbarous country, but after the very rough lodging and rougher travelling he had to put up with, not to mention dangers from Border reivers while at a house near Berwick, he must have been thankful for the hospitality of the canons of Holyrood. Even if he did not show much admiration, he took a keen interest in all he saw. The King he describes as "robust of person and oppressed with exceeding corpulence," but the thing that surprised and interested him most was seeing "the poor, almost naked, begging at the church doors, depart with joy in their faces on receiving stones as alms."

When he inquired what particular virtue these stones possessed, he was still more surprised to hear that, "whether by reason of sulphurous or some fatter matter," they were "burned instead of wood, whereof this country is destitute." The great forest in which David I had had his adventure on Holy Cross Day was even then a thing of the past, and the Edinburgh coal-fields were just beginning to be made use of.

Two years after the future Pope's visit, Holyrood had an air of gloomy festivity. On March 25, 1437, James II, a child of six, was brought to the Abbey to be crowned, some five weeks after his father's murder in Perth. There was a great concourse of nobles, churchmen and citizens present, and when the Bishop of St. Andrews, James Kennedy (whose house, as we noticed before, was in Monteith's Close in the High Street), placed the crown on the boy's head, all the usual forms of rejoicing were gone through, but, except for those whose ambition prompted them to make capital out of troubled times, hearts were heavy at the prospect of the long minority. Although Holyrood was destined to have such an important connection with the royal family, only two coronations took place within it, this one of James II, and that of Charles I, nearly two centuries later.

In 1449 young James was present at another, far more joyous ceremony—his marriage with Mary of Gueldres, "young, beautiful, and of a masculine constitution," who brought with her a magnificent train of nobles and knights as an escort, and, what endeared her yet more to her new subjects, a very handsome dowry. Joustings and feasting followed one after another. The troubled childhood of the King and the "Black Dinner" in the Castle were all forgotten. Prospects were happy once more, but the time was short, for in 1460 James II was killed at Roxburgh, and a sad procession wound its way over the hills to Edinburgh

to lay his coffin in the royal vault beside his ancestor, David II.

Mary, who built the collegiate church of Holy Trinity in memory of her husband, died three years later, and James III, who was only nine at his father's death, had the usual uneasy childhood of a Scottish boy-king. He was married in Holyrood to Margaret of Norway, Denmark and Sweden, but he appears to have spent little of his life at the Abbey.

More important events, so far as Holyrood was concerned, occurred in the next reign. James IV was not untouched by the dawn of the Renaissance, which had so completely changed the whole outlook on life in other countries. He was a warrior imbued with ideas of chivalry, which were later to prove fatal to him, but he was a man of culture too, with a wish to encourage art and literature in his very uncultured kingdom. William Dunbar, the Scottish poet of that day, had his protection and patronage, and, with a view to supplying Margaret Tudor, his bride-to-be, with better accommodation than the mediæval castle offered, James began to build the palace of Holyrood. Though still far from completion, there was a suitable dwelling for him to bring his fourteen-year-old bride to, and her English escort was surprised to find Edinburgh much less barbarous than they expected. On the 8th of August, 1503, the ill-assorted marriage took place in the Abbey. James was a resplendent figure in a robe of white satin figured with gold, a black velvet doublet slashed with crimson, and crimson trunk hose. His cap was of black velvet caught up on one side with a ruby, and at his belt he wore a magnificent sword. Margaret, too, was gorgeously clad in a gown of white-and-gold damask bordered with crimson velvet, set off by her crown, and a collar of pearls and precious stones. After the wedding came a great banquet in the new royal apartments, hung with blue and red for the occasion. Food was plentiful if

somewhat coarse, for the English chronicler describes how the royal table was first served with a boar's head, then brawn, then a ham, " and divers other dishes, to the number of twelve."

In the weeks that followed, Holyrood and the King's Park were the scene of all manner of festivities. James played cards every evening with his bride, and sang, accompanying himself on the lute, or asked his English guests to sing. The Earl of Surrey, who was destined to bring disaster to James in later years, distinguished himself in the tournaments, trials of strength, and hunting parties that enlivened the day. William Dunbar, the poet, wrote his verses on the wedding of " The Thrissel and the Rois," minstrels were brought from Aberdeen to amuse Margaret, and not a shadow of tragedy hung, in those days, over the newly-cut stone of the palace.

Ten years later, on September 10, 1513, news of the disaster at Flodden was brought to Holyrood, and, amid the wild ringing of alarm bells, the canons chanted masses for the souls of the fallen, and all present groaned at the thought of long years of chaos again, for the new King, James V, was only eighteen months old.

Much of his childhood was spent at Holyrood, in his mother's charge, with Sir David Lindsay of the Mount, the chivalrous knight and poet, who stands out as one of the romantic figures of the age, for his Governor. Partly inherited from his father, and partly drawn from the teachings of Sir David, James, too, had a strong vein of romance in his nature, which led him, when a young man, to wander about the country alone, in disguise, in search of adventure, which he generally found, as the famous tale of the " Gudeman of Ballengeich " bears witness. The building of Holyrood was completed, and then he went abroad in search of a wife, and returned in 1537 with the very attractive,

but consumptive, Princess Magdalene, daughter of Francis I of France.

It was on the eve of Whit-Sunday, May 27, that they landed at Leith, and James gave orders that preparations should be made straightway for a coronation such as had never been seen before in Scotland. But it was not a coronation that was in store for Magdalene. The east winds blew later than usual this year, and early June at Holyrood was very different from what it would have been in one of the chateaux of Tourraine. In spite of all that the King could do, and it was but little, she died on July 10, seven weeks after landing at Leith, and was buried in " the Abbey Kirk of Hallierudhous, whereof the King took great displeasure, and therefore keepit him quiet ane lang time after."

The following summer the Queen's apartments were opened once more, for Mary of Guise this time. There were the usual rejoicings at the new Queen's entry (her marriage had taken place at St. Andrews), but heavy shadows lay over the country. Four years passed by, and on December 14 James turned his face to the wall at Falkland, heart-broken over the defeat at Solway Moss, leaving his kingdom to his daughter Mary, whose birth had taken place at Linlithgow a few days earlier, on December 8.

In 1544 Holyrood fell on evil days. Hertford invaded Scotland, destroying all before him. The Regent Arran retreated to Linlithgow, leaving Edinburgh to its fate. The Netherbow Port was blown in and Hertford's men marched up the High Street, setting fire to the town as they passed, in spite of all that the citizens, hastily mustered under the Blue Blanket, could do. The Castle held out, however, and Hertford, forced to fall back, had to content himself with sacking the defenceless Abbey and palace. Sir Richard Lee, one of the English officers, bethought him of " souvenirs," and so carried away a " fair font of solid brasse " and an eagle lectern

from the chapel. The former he presented to the minster at St. Albans, from whence it disappeared during the Civil War, and the latter to St. Stephen's Church in the same town. It, too, disappeared, but curiously enough, in 1750, when the sexton was digging a grave, his spade struck metal. A little search revealed the lectern, which had been buried by the clergy in Cromwell's day and forgotten. It was replaced in the church, and there it remains, the lectern which George Crichtoun gave to Holyrood, when he was made Bishop of Dunkeld in 1528.

As if this wrecking of the Abbey was not enough, Hertford (now Protector Somerset) returned in 1547, after the Battle of Pinkie, and completed the work of destruction by stripping the roof of lead, and burning yet more of the palace. The canons, who were scattered far and wide after the first sack, never returned to Holyrood, and though in a few years, under Reformation influence, the nave was re-roofed and turned into the parish church, with Mr. Craig, a colleague of John Knox's, for minister, the chancel and transepts were pulled down, and the glory of the great abbey church departed for ever. The palace, too, was repaired, and used on various occasions during the troublous regency of Mary of Guise, but it was not until her daughter's return from France in 1561 that it became the centre of Court life once again.

It was on August 19, a cold, cheerless day, overhung with the familiar easterly "haar," that Mary, Queen of Scots, her four Maries, and her French retinue, landed at Leith. She had arrived ten days sooner than was expected, to mitigate the risk of capture by the English *en route*, but even so, though she had escaped, the vessel containing her horses and those of her suite had been captured. Nothing was in readiness, and when her half-brother, Lord James, arrived at Leith he brought with him a number of rough, un-

kempt ponies, " with villainous old saddles and bridles," the sight of which brought tears of mortification and anger to Mary's eyes, and covert jests and sneers to the lips of her attendants. The citizens, taken by surprise, hastily lit a bonfire by way of welcome, but the evidence of religious gloom and extreme poverty was abundant on every side. She was lodged in apartments on the ground floor, and at night, Brantôme, the French historian, says, " there came under her windows five or six hundred citizens, who gave her a concert of the vilest fiddles and little rebecs, which are as bad as they can be in this country, and accompanied them with singing psalms, but so wretchedly out of tune and concord that nothing could have been more hideous. Ah ! what a melody it was ! what a lullaby for the night ! "

However, life was not without its charm for Mary in those days. Her public entry on September 1 made up for her inauspicious arrival. The shaggy ponies were soon replaced by a fine stud, and she defended herself from future onslaughts of psalm-singing by removing to the upper rooms which have so long been associated with her. Knox might rail upon her at St. Giles's and " the good Lord James," whose title to goodness is not indisputable, might wrap himself in dark intrigues, but she was popular with her people still, and surrounded herself with a most joyous Court. When the weather permitted there were hunting parties made up, or the Queen would practise shooting at the butts behind the palace. She played pall-mall and golf too, and whenever occasion offered, she loved to get up a masque, in which she and the " Maries " sometimes took part. If possible these were held in the open air, and certainly on one occasion she used St. Margaret's Loch, with the hills and St. Anthony's Chapel above it, for a setting.

There was plenty of amusement indoors as well. She

loved cards, chess, and tables (a game something like backgammon). Dancing and music were always welcome, and in her more serious hours she studied with Buchanan, reading "somewhat of Livy" with him after her dinner, and striving also to learn English, though she never did acquire this last accomplishment to the degree of feeling at home in the language. The bare, half-empty rooms at Holyrood were decorated under her supervision. The walls were hung with tapestry, and from her own apartments she banished the time-honoured rushes, and laid down Turkey carpets instead, to the amazement of the noble Scottish ladies, who had never imagined the possibility of such luxuries. The rough wooden benches and settles were replaced by small sofas, upholstered in red velvet, and "tabourets" such as were in use at the French Court. A "horloge" or two, made to strike, found their way into the palace, books and embroidery frames took the place of the hunting knives and horns of her predecessors, and—crowning touch of modernity—she liked to see bowls of flowers in her rooms.

But the clouds were gathering all too quickly. Mary's position was impossible. As Andrew Lang says, she "was the Helen of the modern world. Discord came to her christening with the apple of strife, the one fatal gift among many gifts so goodly: beauty, charm, courage and a loyal heart. . . . Fate, from her cradle, lay so heavy upon her that no conceivable conduct of hers could have steered her safely through the plotting crowns and creeds, the rival dissemblers, bigots, hypocrites, and ruffians who, with jealousy and hatred and desire, on every side surrounded her."

The tragedies of Mary's reign, so far as Holyrood is concerned, are so well known that they can be passed over briefly.

On July 29, 1565, the first fatal step was taken. She was married to Darnley, in the private chapel at

Holyrood, by the Bishop of Brechin. It must have been a dismal ceremony, very unlike the former state weddings at Holyrood, for it took place in the early morning between five and six o'clock, and Mary had not even a wedding dress, but wore " the greate mourninge gowne of blacke with the greate wyde mourninge hoode, not unlyke unto that which she wore the dolefull daye of the burial of her husbande."

On the evening of March 9, 1566, the fatal supper party, at which Rizzio was present, was held in the minute room, which has ever since been the most famous spot in the palace. All the world knows how Darnley, Morton, Ruthven, Douglas and others burst into the room, having come up the private staircase, how Rizzio cowered down behind the Queen, in a last hope of protection, how she would have shielded him, but was thrust back and held by Darnley, and how the wretched Italian was dragged out of the room, through the bedroom, into the audience chamber, where he was stabbed to death by the conspirators, each so eager to have a hand in the deed that the body was one mass of dagger wounds before they had done with it.

Every one knows, too, the sequel to that supper party. On February 1, 1567, Darnley, ill with smallpox, was brought from Glasgow to the Kirk-o'-Field, the house belonging to the Duke of Hamilton, which stood just outside the city walls, where the University stands to-day. Every day the Queen went to visit him from Holyrood, and on more than one occasion she spent the night at the Kirk-o'-Field, in one of the lower rooms. On Sunday, February 9, Darnley was so much better that he was able to leave his room, and even talked of riding again the next day. It was a busy day at Holyrood. In the morning two of Mary's servants, Sebastian Paiges and Margaret Carwood, were married in her private chapel. Then she was present at a great banquet which the Bishop of Argyle gave in

honour of the Ambassador from Savoy who was in Edinburgh. In the evening there was to be a ball for the newly-married pair, but before that the Queen went to visit Darnley and stayed with him till ten o'clock. By eleven she was in the ballroom at Holyrood, arrayed in her dark velvet dress, with a little crown of silver daisies and pearls on her head. After dancing and merry-making with her household for an hour the Queen retired at midnight, her departure being the signal for the party to break up, so that in a little while all was silent at Holyrood, except for the tramp of the sentries. At two o'clock an explosion like a terrific thunder-clap woke every sleeper in the town and echoed dully round the hills. At once the Queen sent to know what was amiss, and in a few minutes Argyle and his Countess, Bothwell and Lady Marr, and some others, rushed into her room with the news that the Kirk-o'-Field had been blown to atoms, and that the dead bodies of Darnley and his page had been found lying in the garden.

For two days the Queen remained in her room, prostrated with horror. By her orders Darnley's body was embalmed, brought to the chapel, and laid before the altar surrounded by candles. At the end of five days, in the evening, when the Abbey gates were shut, it was placed in the royal vault, with little or no ceremony, for a tumult in the city was feared. As to Mary's share in the murder—who can tell? Much has been written to prove her innocence, and to prove her guilt. On the whole the verdict of time is against her, but here we leave the matter, as one of those historical enigmas which never will be solved to the satisfaction of all parties.

On May 15 of that same year, at four in the morning, when the daylight contended with the candles, the Bishop of Orkney stood at the east end of what was now the parish church of the Canongate, formerly the

nave of the Abbey Church. In front of him knelt two figures—Mary and Bothwell. On their right was the royal vault, which had been opened to receive Darnley's body, and somewhere near—Mary would have known the exact spot—Rizzio's remains were mouldering away beneath the pavement. It was a grim marriage, this of Mary and Bothwell, as the few who were present must have felt, and boded ill for the future. For three weeks they lived together at Holyrood, and then fled before the confederate nobles who had taken up arms against them. Mary's connection with the old palace was severed, for, except for a few hours she spent there as a prisoner, before being taken to Lochleven, she was never to be within its walls again.

Time passed on, and in 1586, nineteen years after Mary's flight, her son James VI, having reached man's estate, took up his abode there. Four years after that, on May 1, 1690, Court and town were early astir making preparations for holding high festival, for James had been to Denmark to marry and fetch his bride, Anne, and now the royal pair were expected to land at Leith. A little uncertain as to what comments her Danish companions might pass on her new country, James had written an urgent letter to the Lord Provost, ordering that all middens should be removed from the streets, that the pavement should be repaired, and arrangements made for feeding and housing the visitors at the town's expense, adding as a last anxious post-script: "For God's sake see a' things are richt at our hamecoming." Finding his own wardrobe not all that could be desired, he had written to the Earl of Marr, asking the loan of a pair of silk stockings, for "Ye wudna' wish that your King suld appear a scrub on sic an occasion." From John Boswell of Balmuto he borrowed 1,000 merks, and then felt he had done all he could to make himself and his capital presentable for his bride. All went well, the townsfolk provided a

coach lined with crimson velvet for the Queen, the fountain at the Cross flowed with claret, pageants were produced and speeches made for her ; guns were fired, sermons preached, and, best of all, just as they were leaving the city, a casket containing 20,000 crowns (about £8,500) was let down from the Netherbow Port as a wedding present from the good folk of Edinburgh. Such was the " hamecoming " of James and Anne.

There is always a musical-comedy touch about James's doings, a pleasant relief to the overcharged tragic atmosphere of Mary's later years at Holyrood. When Francis, Earl of Bothwell, nephew of Mary's Bothwell, the bane of James's life, burst into Holyrood one evening at the head of a band of armed followers, there was no hideous murder, only a hasty attempt at flight on the King's part, down the back stairs, " with his breeks in his hand," and finally a reconciliation when the King, still breekless, pardoned his turbulent subject, who, on his part, fell on his knees and swore repentance for his misdoings.

Various domestic incidents mark James's life at Holyrood. In 1594, Henry, the King's eldest son, was born, and in 1596 " the Lady Elizabeth, first daughter of Scotland," was proclaimed by the Lyon King-at-Arms from the palace window. On December 23, 1600, Prince Charles, the future Charles I, was baptized in the royal chapel amid great splendour, after which the heralds, who proclaimed him, cried, " Largesse, largesse ! " and a shower of silver (strictly limited in quantity if it had to come from the King's purse) was thrown to the people outside.

Then came an incident that changed the destiny of the old palace entirely. It was late one Saturday evening—March 26, 1603. The King and Queen had retired after supper, and all was quiet in preparation for the Sabbath. Suddenly a stir was heard at the gate-house ; sleepy attendants came out to see what

was amiss, and found an exhausted, dishevelled man, on a foam-spattered horse, demanding an immediate interview with the King. His urgency was such that James was roused from his bed, and in another moment the rider, Sir Robert Carey, was on his knees before his half-dressed Majesty, addressing him as King of England, and returning him the ring which James had given to Lady Scrope, Carey's sister, a member of Queen Elizabeth's household, and which she had dropped out of the window for her waiting brother to take to Scotland the moment the great English Queen had breathed her last. Such good speed had he made that he reached Edinburgh within three days, long before the authorized envoys sent by the Privy Council, who took exactly double the time.

On April 5, a long procession wound southward along the Berwick road, and Holyrood was left lonely and desolate.

For the next seventy-six years there was but little doing at the old palace. In spite of the promise James had given to return to his native country every three years, he only visited it once in the course of the twenty-two remaining years of his life, and that was in 1617, when he came with a splendid train of English nobles, among them his favourite, Buckingham, and the Earl of Southampton, Shakespeare's patron. The visit was not an unmixed success, for James's religious views had diverged far from the strict Presbyterianism of Edinburgh, and displeasure was great when he gave orders that the Abbey Church should be restored on the model of England. The culminating point was reached when it was discovered that figures of the twelve apostles were to be used in the decoration of the building. A riot was only avoided by the King agreeing to withdraw the obnoxious images, though he did so with the dry remark: "Ye can endure lyons, dragons and devills to be figured in your churches, but

ye will not allow the like place to the Patriarchs and the Apostles."

In 1633, Charles I came to Holyrood to be crowned, and again for a short visit in 1641, just before the outbreak of the Civil War. The old sundial in the palace garden, adorned with his cypher, and that of his queen, is a memorial of this visit.

In the autumn of 1650, Cromwell, fresh from his triumph at Dunbar, quartered troops at Holyrood, and by some carelessness the palace was set on fire and completely gutted, with the exception of the James V Tower. Cromwell paid for the damage by having it partly rebuilt some years later, but his work was pulled down after the Restoration, and the new palace, as we see it to-day, was built.

In October, 1679, Holyrood was restored to something of its old glory, for James, Duke of York, arrived there with the Duchess and his two daughters, Mary and Anne. During the agitation in England over the Exclusion Bill, he thought it prudent not only to be absent from the scene, but also to attach the Scottish gentry and nobility to himself personally, so that in the event of losing the English crown he might still keep Scotland for himself and his house. Hence his three years in Edinburgh were marked by greater splendour and ceremonial than had been seen since the days of his grandmother, Queen Mary, and James was more popular than he had ever been before, or would ever be again, in spite of the harsh treatment of the Covenanters. His stiff, formal manners were by no means repellent to the proud Scotch nobility, and the easier ways of Mary of Modena and her stepdaughters made a favourable impression on the ladies who attended balls and were given cups of a curious and vastly expensive beverage known as tea. On one occasion when a guest turned faint, the Duchess sent for another expensive luxury, a sugar-loaf, and scraped off a spoon-

ful of its grains to make *eau sucré* as a restorative. Plays were acted regularly in a theatre fitted up at the tennis-court near the Water Gate. James could be seen constantly playing golf at Leith or strolling in the King's Park, where the Duke's Walk still keeps the memory of one of his favourite paths. Any improvements to the city received encouragement from him, and had his residence been longer it is probable that the North Bridge would have been a *fait accompli* by the end of the century, and the birth of the New Town would have been advanced by some eighty years. However, in 1682 the ducal family and their train departed south once more, and another period of desolation set in.

On coming to the throne, James issued an order that the congregation which, according to his views, desecrated the Chapel Royal by its presence was to seek accommodation elsewhere, that Roman Catholic worship should be restored there once more, and that it should be used as the chapel of the Knights of the Thistle. Such an order was bound to cause trouble, and trouble came very shortly, when James fled before William of Orange. Holyrood was held for the King by Captain Wallace, who, although summoned to give up his charge, refused to do so, and defended his post with a handful of musketeers until, the City Guard having forced an entrance at the rear, he was obliged to surrender. Thereupon the mob burst in and, apparently unrestrained by the Guard, rushed to James's private chapel, which they wrecked utterly, destroying vestments, missals, and every article of beauty, every artistic treasure it contained. Then, in the mad fury of destruction, they settled like locusts upon the Chapel Royal, the nave of the old Abbey Church. The altar was smashed to atoms; the richly-carved stalls for the Knights of the Thistle were hacked with axes and sledge-hammers till they were nothing but a mass of

splintered wood; the throne was publicly burnt at the Cross; the organ was destroyed, and the banners of the Knights were torn to rags. Not content with all this the royal vault itself was forced open and the coffins of Scotland's long dead kings and queens shared in the general desecration.

That is the end of the history of the old church. After its wrecking in 1688 its importance as a place of worship came to an end, for the Presbyterian congregation had moved to Lady Yester's Church, until their new building in the Canongate should be ready for them. In the middle of the eighteenth century the roof had become so ruinous that the Government was moved to order repairs. Little interest was shown in the matter, with the result that flagstones were used far too heavy for the ancient arches to bear. One winter's night in 1768 the whole roof, with the exception of the part over the north-west tower, came crashing to the ground, snapping off the pillars, and leaving the walls as we see them to-day. In 1795 another storm blew in the great east window, the remains of which lay scattered about for twenty years, when at last they were put together again and restored. The last part of the roof, that of the north-west tower, came down in 1816, and the work of desolation was complete.

The palace of Holyrood fared better than the church. It still had a few glorious hours in front of it. On Monday, September 16, 1745, the town was in an uproar. The Highland army was approaching, and the dragoons, who had marched out to intercept it, had fled ignominiously without striking a blow. The Hanoverian garrison had shut themselves up in the Castle, and fired useless rounds from the guns, while "James VIII, King of Scotland, England, France and Ireland," was proclaimed at the Cross. Alarm bells and joy bells were ringing simultaneously. Every Jacobite was jubilant, and every Hanoverian was wondering what

the next step would be. In the King's Park a huge crowd awaited the rather dishevelled procession that marched in clouds of dust towards Holyrood. Every eye was turned towards the leader, Prince Charles, a gallant figure in tartan coat, scarlet breeches, and high military boots, with the jewelled star of St. Andrew catching the light as he rode, and a blue velvet bonnet, turned up with a white cockade, on his long fair hair.

The royal salute that greeted him as he entered the palace of his fathers was a cannon ball from the Castle that struck one of the towers and brought down a shower of rubbish upon him, but the cheering of the multitude was a convincing indication that his presence was by no means unwelcome. That night a ball was given in what is now the Picture Gallery, and the hideous portraits of early Scottish kings, done by contract for James VI, looked down upon such an array of tartans, white roses and cockades as had never been seen within its walls before. On the 19th anxious faces watched the departure of the Prince and his army for Prestonpans, and two days later jubilation was great when he returned victorious, after routing Sir John Cope.

Until the 31st of October the tartan reigned supreme at Holyrood. Balls were constantly given, levées and receptions followed in quick succession, but, in spite of popular tradition, eye-witnesses have left it on record that in those days the Prince was more at home in the camp at Duddingston than in the gallery at Holyrood, and that the youth and beauty of Edinburgh found him cold and shy, and less like the fairy prince of romance than they expected.

After Culloden, a victorious general entered Holyrood once more, but this time it was Cumberland who slept in the state bed still shown in what is called " Darnley's audience-chamber," which, it is said, Charles I had occupied in days gone by. Instead of tartans and white

cockades, the pictures in the gallery looked down upon the English troops who were hastily quartered there, with bundles of straw thrown down for bedding.

The last spark of bygone splendour was extinguished. In 1796 the exiled Comte d'Artois took up his abode at Holyrood, but his Court had little of glory or splendour about it, though both he and his son, the Duc d'Angoulême, were popular in Edinburgh. In 1799 he penned a farewell address to the magistrates and people, and left Holyrood. Thirty-one years later he returned to it as Charles X, an exiled King this time, hoping that with his family and suite he might end his days peacefully at Holyrood. Unluckily for him, Louis Philippe objected to this, and the old King reluctantly turned his steps elsewhere, leaving the palace to slumber on through the years, only disturbed for brief moments by a royal visit, or by the annual appearance of the Lord High Commissioner to the General Assembly, and his Court of a fortnight's duration.

CHAPTER VIII

THE COWGATE AND GRASSMARKET

"THE Cowgate, where the nobility and the chief men of the city reside, and in which are the palaces of the officers of State, and where is nothing mean or tasteless, but all is magnificent." It is close on four centuries since Alexander Alane, or Alesius, a citizen of Edinburgh, wrote a Latin description of his town, of which the paragraph quoted above is a translation, and it is difficult in these days for the mind's eye to see it as it was. It must be pictured as a deep glen from which one looked up, on the north side, through sunny gardens planted with trees, to the irregular row of houses, some of stone, with crow-stepped roofs, most of them timber-fronted, with galleries and gables breaking out into quaint shapes and angles, and others mere huts put together with whatever material came handy, and roofed with a thick thatching of heather. Looking southwards, the eye was met by more gardens, together with orchards, pastures and waste land, set here and there with religious houses, each with its church, its cemetery, and its group of outbuildings. The name of that squalid, depressing street, the Pleasance, for instance, was not given in irony, but developed naturally from "Placentia," for here stood the convent of St. Mary of Placentia, just on the edge of the wide expanse of waste land known as the Burghmuir. Next to it came the rich monastery of the Black Friars, with lands extending all the way

up the hill, and beyond it towards the present Nicholson Street and Richmond Street. Adjoining their lands were those belonging to the Collegiate Church of Our Lady-in-the-Fields, which covered the ground now occupied by Infirmary Street and the University. Conveniently shortened up into Kirk-o'-Field, its name was destined to go down to posterity with a grim significance that has entirely eclipsed its earlier history. Farther west still, at the Cowgatehead came another great monastery, the Grey Friars of Observance, whose name has been given to the famous cemetery made upon their lands.

So much for the surroundings. Now for the Cowgate itself. Even in the fifteenth century the need of expansion from the confined quarters of the High Street began to be felt, and the few houses built in this very early new town were so admired that others quickly followed. There was Archbishop Beaton's palace at the foot of Blackfriars Wynd, and nearly opposite to it, across the street, was the abode of Gavin Douglas, the celebrated Bishop of Dunkeld, third son of Archibald, Earl of Angus. A tablet marks the site of Beaton's palace, but both houses have long since disappeared, and it is difficult to conjure up their aspect in 1520, the year of the great " Cleanse the Causeway " conflict. It was to Beaton's house that the Bishop of Dunkeld came, beseeching that crafty prelate to use his influence in reconciling the hostile factions of Angus and Arran, representing the great houses of Douglas and Hamilton. We all know the story of that mission: how Beaton struck his breast to emphasize his oath that, upon his conscience, he had no concern with the dispute, how the steel armour he was wearing under his robes resounded to the blow, and how Douglas, with the dry humour so characteristic of the Scot, remarked, " My Lord, methinks your conscience clatters ! " (clattering meaning also the betraying of a secret) and withdrew.

The sequel to the interview was the street fight in which the Douglases got the upper hand, and, driving the Hamiltons before them, would have captured and murdered Beaton had he not fled across the Cowgate and up the hill beyond to the Black Friars' Church, where he took sanctuary at the altar steps.

Turning from the past to the present it is disappointing at first to realize how much that was ancient and picturesque has been swept away in the course of the last hundred years. Going down St. Mary Street, we turn to the right into the Cowgate at the spot where the Cowgate Port, part of the Flodden Wall, gave entrance to the southern part of the city in days gone by. A few yards up the street on the north side the old gateway and carriage entrance to Tweeddale House still remains, though the garden and grove of limes into which it opened has long since given place to Messrs. Oliver and Boyd's printing works. On the other side the name "High School Yards" on one of the closes recalls the days of Baillie Macmorran, and later on, of Sir Walter Scott, when the famous High School dominated the Cowgate, and the classical building on the side of the Calton Hill was still unthought of.

Returning to the north side again, the house at the foot of Blackfriars Street bears the tablet before mentioned, indicating the site of the palace occupied by the two Beatons, the Archbishop, and afterwards his nephew, the Cardinal.

At the foot of Niddry Street, on the east side, is a long two-story building much begrimed by time, smoke, and neglect. This is the famous St. Cecilia's Hall of eighteenth-century Edinburgh, where weekly concerts were given under the management of a governor, a deputy, a treasurer, and five directors, who arranged the programmes, and distributed the tickets to those who were entitled to the honour, for, like the Assemblies under Miss Nicky Murray's rule, the concerts were only open

to a most select audience. Lord Cockburn tells us that, as a young man, he saw here "most of our literary and fashionable gentlemen with their side curls, and frills, and ruffles, and silver buckles; and our stately matrons stiffened in hoops and gorgeous satins; and our beauties with high-heeled shoes, powdered and pomatumed hair, and lofty and composite head-dresses." What a sight it must have been for lookers-on from the Cowgate when the sedan chairs were set down in front of the door, and the light from the smoky links gave glimpses of the occupants as they passed into the hall where the fiddles were already being tuned up for a concerto of Corelli's, or the singers were taking their places for one of Handel's choruses.

Among the old shops which cluster round the South Bridge, where the pawnbroker and the rag-and-bone dealer predominate to-day, are some much the same to outward appearance as on the day that their owners flung down their tools to go and see an execution in the Grassmarket, or to hear James VIII proclaimed at the Market Cross. These were once the homes of prosperous citizens, and behind them were numerous narrow closes, cut off short now in the course of schemes for the much-needed opening-out and improving of these dreary regions, but running right up the hill formerly. College Wynd, on the south side, is one of these, and here, it will be remembered, Sir Walter Scott was born on August 15, 1771, in a house long since vanished, which stood at the end of the close, where the north side of the University was afterwards built.

Next to College Wynd, on the same side, is Guthrie Street, formerly the Horse Wynd, a fashionable quarter of the town in the early part of the eighteenth century. Lord Minto had a house here, so had Sir John Inglis of Cramond, Lord Kennet, Mr. Dewar of Vogrie, and various other people of note in their day, including an episcopal clergyman, Mr. Andrew Simson, who,

expelled from his living at the Revolution, worked as a printer in the Cowgate for many years. One of these old houses still remains, a few yards up the street on the west side. This was the town mansion of the Earl of Galloway, and here, after his death, his Countess lived for many years in great pomp, dignity and piety. At a time when sedan chairs were the usual mode of conveyance, her ladyship kept a coach and six, and never moved without it, though the distance she was going might be absurdly small. It was even said that the heads of her leading pair of horses were seen at the door of the house she was going to when she was stepping into the coach at her own door!

Passing farther westwards along the Cowgate, still on the south side, we come to one of the finest remains of old Edinburgh still in existence. This is the Tailors' Hall, now part of Campbell's Brewery, reached through a broad archway, above which is a stone tablet bearing the insignia of the craft, a huge pair of scissors or shears, the date 1644, and an inscription which runs as follows:

"ALMIGHTIE GOD WHO FOUND.
ED BUILT AND CROUNED
THIS WORK WITH BLESSINGS
MAK IT TO ABOUND."

Through the archway, which is surmounted by a seventeenth-century house, is the yard of the brewery, bounded on the south by the Tailors' Hall itself, a three-story building, dated 1621, which has been put to many and varied uses since the pious members of the guild first sat there to discuss matters connected with their calling. On February 27, 1638, a great meeting of ministers was held there. Three hundred of them, together with the Earls of Rothes, Lindsay and Loudon, met to discuss the terms of the National Covenant (not to be confused with the Solemn League and Covenant) which was to

be put before the public for signature next day in Greyfriars churchyard. The deliberations were lengthy, for some of those present objected to certain points, but these were taken out into the garden by Rothes and some of the others, and there urged to bury private grievances in mutual assent, until sufficient unanimity was secured to draw up the document.

Eighteen years later a board of Commissioners appointed by the uncovenanted Cromwell sat here, to arrange the administration of estates forfeited by the Royalists. Then comes a long period when, presumably, the Tailors were left in undisturbed possession, until somewhere about the year 1727, when it came to the fore as a playhouse. Players had no easy time in Edinburgh at that period, owing to fierce opposition on the part of the clergy and Town Council, though when they did succeed in playing, the house was usually full as a natural consequence of that opposition. Concerts were legal, though stage-plays for which money was taken were not, and the advertisement would be drawn up like the following, from the "Edinburgh Courant" of January 27, 1743: "By desire of a lady of Quality, for the benefit of Mrs. Hamilton, on Monday next, being the 31st instant, will be performed a concert of vocal and instrumental musick. After the first part of the concert will be given, gratis, the Mourning Bride; to which will be added, gratis, the Toy Shop." In due course public opinion became too strong for the more narrow-minded of Church and Town Council; the Canongate Playhouse was licensed and the Tailors' Hall became the grain store of the Brewery; not a bad fate as it turned out, since it has been preserved in that way, and is hardly likely to be demolished now.

Returning to the street, the house next the archway is worth noticing for the sake of its narrow doorway, with the initials R. H. O. and J. H., a text, and the date

1643, and a curious device over it of two men carrying a barrel between them, slung on a pole that rests on their shoulders. A little farther on still, half swallowed up in the shadow of George IV Bridge, and the high buildings with which it is surrounded, is another interesting relic of bygone days, the Magdalene Chapel, which possesses the only pre-Reformation glass in Edinburgh that escaped destruction at the hands of the reforming mob.

In the early days of the city's history a Maison Dieu was founded on the sloping ground to the south. In the storm and stress of mediæval times it fell into decay, but was re-founded in the reign of James IV by bequests from one Michael Macqueen, a wealthy citizen, and his widow Janet Rhynd. There was a hospital to accommodate seven poor men, and a chapel with an endowment for a chaplain, all of which was left in trust to the Corporation of Hammermen. There were donations in 1541 from Hugh, Lord Somerville, but the prosperity of the charity must have been sadly interrupted by Hertford's burning of the city three years later. However, the building was quickly repaired, for the glass presents the royal arms and those of Mary of Guise as well, who must still have been Regent when the windows were erected. Inside is the founder's tomb almost entirely hidden under a raised platform, and the arms of the twenty-two corporations that went to form the Guild of the Hammermen, who afterwards used the chapel as their meeting-hall. When the Reformation burst in its full violence over Scotland, John Craig, the celebrated preacher who had spent years in exile, returned to Edinburgh and was appointed to the Magdalene Chapel. Curiously enough, he found himself unable to preach in the Scottish tongue, to which he had been unaccustomed for so long, and had to fall back upon Latin as the one common language between himself and his congregation, an incident which speaks

well for Scottish learning, since the sermons appear to have given satisfaction. In 1685 the body of the Earl of Argyle (the Lord Lorne who had stood with his bride on the balcony of Moray House when Montrose went by on his hurdle) was brought here after execution, until it could be taken to the family burying-place at Kilmun, while the head decorated a spike on the north gable of the Tolbooth.

In later years the chapel became the property of the Protestant Institute of Scotland, and now forms part of the Livingstone Dispensary, through which it is entered.

Coming out of the narrow, dingy Cowgate into the breadth of the Grassmarket, no one can fail to be struck by the magnificence of the Castle towering high up above the street, and in former days, when there was no road to break the steep slope from the foot of the walls to the deep valley beneath, and every house in the Grassmarket possessed the beauty of antiquity, the sight must have been more imposing than it is to-day. Within the last century practically all the south side of the Grassmarket has been rebuilt; the old inns on the north have been altered and re-fronted, though their names remain; the West Bow, that steep street leading to the Lawnmarket, has disappeared, except for a few yards at the top, and a group of old houses at the bottom, in the making of the easier uninteresting slope of Victoria Street, but its associations are left in spite of all the changes time can bring about.

There are three distinct associations possessed by the Grassmarket—royal splendour, commerce and traffic, and the hangman's rope. To take the first; this was the main approach to the Castle and the High Street from the west, and many a royal procession entered the city by way of the West Port, the name of which still survives in the street leading out of the Grass-

market at the south-west end. The West Port, by the way, was destined to attain a notoriety all its own in later years. Tanners Close, near-by, an unsavoury cul-de-sac, now swept away, was the scene of the famous "West Port Murders" perpetrated by Burke and Hare in 1827 and 1828, the well-known details of which make as grim a story as any that Edinburgh can tell, and that is saying a good deal. To turn back, however, to a typical royal procession, we must transport ourselves to the year 1617. One summer's day every window and every roof was crowded with loyal citizens, eagerly awaiting the arrival of James VI on his return to Edinburgh after fourteen years in England. James, who was no great horseman, had done the greater part of the journey by coach, but he mounted a quiet palfrey on leaving Leith, and rode, fairly secure in his high-peaked, well-padded saddle, along the High Riggs (now Princes Street), circled round the Castle past St. Cuthbert's Church, and arrived at the West Port, where the Provost and all the baillies in their velvet robes were in waiting. Kneeling before the King, the Provost presented him with the sceptre of the city, "as also, in a silver bason over-gilt with gold, a thousand angells in a velvet bag," which last pleased his Majesty so much that he cried in high good humour, "Leap on, my Lord Provost, upon your horse," and made him ride in the procession between two earls. Meantime the Castle guns overhead thundered forth a welcome that echoed away up to the Pentlands, and all the people "shouted for joy," especially when James, sending his own escort to the rear, entrusted their duties to the City Guard and rode with them across the Grassmarket, up the West Bow, and so down the High Street to St. Giles's and Holyrood.

In 1745 the group of old houses still remaining at the foot of the West Bow watched a rather comic procession pass into the Grassmarket. On September 15 news

reached Edinburgh that the Prince's army had reached Kirkliston, a few miles away, and orders were given immediately that the volunteers, together with the dragoons and the City Guard, should march out and give battle to the invading troops. Led by their commander, Provost Drummond, the volunteers marched to the West Port, with hearts heavy as lead, much to the amusement of the Jacobite ladies, who burst into peals of laughter as the unwarlike band passed their windows with wives, children and friends clinging to their coat-tails begging them not to risk their lives in conflict with the Highland savages. As they went down the West Bow, the numerous dark entries and closes were irresistible. First one man disappeared, then another, then whole scores bolted like rats to their holes. At last the West Port was reached, where Drummond halted his men, and, turning round, discovered to his consternation that the force was reduced to a mere handful, which included David Hume, Alexander Carlyle, John Maclure, the writing master, and a number of the Provost's own friends. Maclure it was who, determined to play his part, however unwillingly, made himself a breastplate of a quire of his thickest writing-paper, inscribing on the topmost sheet, " This is the body of John Maclure, pray give it a Christian burial," for the benefit of those who would find him later, laid low on the field of battle. Poor Maclure : the Jacobite party, and his own friends too, for that matter, never let him forget his precautions, for the march to meet the enemy ended safely at the West Port. Drummond, realizing the futility of advancing with such a handful, waited for some time, and then dismissed the men for the evening. The next day Prince Charlie took peaceful possession of the town, and there was no more talk of giving battle to the enemy.

The Grassmarket's most important aspect in former days was that of " the clearing-house for national

produce." Countless generations of carriers from Aberdeen, from Ayr and Dumfries, or from Berwick, have ended a long journey here. Droves of cattle were brought from the Highlands to be sold here at £10 or £12 Scots apiece. Pack-horses in strings, laden with wool or hides, came in at the West Port, superseded in later years by great wagons with heavy canvas coverings which rattled over the paving-stones, bringing in country food-products, or going out again laden with packages of all shapes and sizes, containing luxuries from the city destined for the laird or some well-to-do farmer away in the wilds of Ayrshire or the Merse. At the west end stood the Corn Market, where merchants and farmers haggled over oats and bere. Among the crowd outside, horses were shown off to prospective buyers with much shouting and cracking of whips, and honest slow-witted citizens looked askance at Highland drovers, who, armed to the teeth as usual, eyed the surging crowd around them with a certain haughty aloofness.

Such was the scene that would have greeted the eye of an eighteenth-century stranger arriving at the White Hart, or the Beehive, both of which still remain on the north side of the Grassmarket, by the Lanark or the Peebles coach. Inns never were a strong point in the city's favour, and few people faced more than a night of their discomfort, without going to seek for rooms in some "land," though the Wordsworths, William and his sister Dorothy, who stayed at the White Hart in 1803, gave it faint praise for being "not noisy, and tolerably cheap."

But the scene of royal entrances and commercial prosperity is entirely overshadowed by grim spectacles at the scaffold that some of these old houses close to the West Port have looked down upon many a time. There, on the spot still marked by stones set in a cross, was the socket of the gallows tree, which shot up during

one night, and disappeared the next with terrible frequency. Here it was that the Covenanters, as brave as they were dour, and as dour as they were brave, met death without flinching, to the sound of psalms sung by the faithful. Here it was too that "Half-hangit Maggie Dickson" went to her doom. Condemned to death for the murder of her illegitimate child, Margaret Dixon, a Musselburgh fish-wife, was hanged in the Grassmarket in 1728. When the execution was over, the body was put into a coffin and taken away on a cart to Musselburgh for burial. It was a hot day, and the driver of the cart, being thirsty, stopped at Peffermill, near Duddington, for a drink. Suddenly, he and some other men with whom he was talking saw the coffin-lid move. He took it off, and, to the horror of the whole party, who promptly took to their heels, Maggie Dickson sat up. One man, braver than the rest, came back, and lifting her out of the coffin, carried her into the inn, where he bled her with a small knife he had. In a short while she recovered completely, and walked home to Musselburgh the next day as if nothing had happened. The upshot of this extraordinary event was that, the judgment of the Court being executed, Maggie Dickson was free. As her marriage was held to be dissolved by her execution, her husband married her again three days after she was hanged, and for the next thirty years she was a familiar figure in the Edinburgh streets, hawking fish or salt. She prospered in her trade too, helped by the fame she had achieved and the grim nickname bestowed upon her—"Half-hangit Maggie."

But just as the scaffold overshadows all else in the Grassmarket, so does the story of Porteous overshadow every other execution that took place there. Alexander Carlyle, then a boy in charge of a tutor, had been present when Robertson, the smuggler, made his dramatic escape from the Tolbooth Church at St. Giles's

two days before his execution. His companion, Wilson, to whom he owed his escape, was to be hanged in the Grassmarket on September 7, 1736. Mr. Baillie, the boy's tutor, had taken a window on the north side of the street for himself and his pupils, and thither they went in good time. Wilson died like a brave man, and though the magistrates, expecting trouble, had taken the precaution of lining the West Bow with troops from the Castle, much to the indignation of Porteous, who commanded the City Guard, no attempt at rescue was made. When all was over, some stones and mud were thrown at the hangman by the hooligans, who were always present on these occasions, but, according to Carlyle, there was nothing unusual in that. However, that was quite enough for Porteous, whose uncontrollable temper was roused to boiling-point by what he considered the slur cast upon his men in the presence of the troops. As soon as the stones were thrown he ordered his men to fire on the crowd, and when they showed reluctance to obey, " I saw him," says Carlyle, " turn to them with threatening gesture and an inflamed countenance." They obeyed, and fired a volley over the heads of the crowd, though their good intentions in that respect only caused the death of several people in the houses, including one lad who was looking out of the window just below Mr. Baillie's. Another volley followed, Porteous, it is said, seizing a musket from one of his men and firing on the people himself. The crowd ran here and there ; several people fell, and young Carlyle and his friends, thinking that they had tumbled down in sheer fright, laughed heartily at the panic. Laughter soon turned to anger when those present saw what had happened. A rising of the mob seemed imminent, and Mr. Baillie was anxious to get his charges safely back to the Lawnmarket. Nothing happened just then, however, and it was soon quiet enough for the boys to slip out of the house and hurry

up to the Castle Wynd to their rooms, where Mr. Baillie made them stay for the rest of the evening.

The sequel to the tragedy has been made familiar to us all by " The Heart of Midlothian "—the condemnation of Porteous and his reprieve ; the fury of the mob and the forcing of the Tolbooth at night. The scene can be pictured to-day—the rioters came down the West Bow, bearing the unhappy Porteous in their midst, all the more terrible for their orderly behaviour. Windows were thrown up and faces appeared, lit for a moment by the gleam of the torches. A booth at the foot of the Bow was forced, and a rope taken from it, the rioters leaving a guinea on the counter in payment. As the gallows had been removed from its socket, a dyer's pole over the door of an old house (now pulled down) next to Hunter's Close, on the south side of the Grassmarket, served the purpose. As soon as their work was done the rioters disappeared as mysteriously as they had come. In the morning, when daylight came, there was the body of Porteous still hanging, and scattered about the street were the Lochaber axes and the drums which had been taken from the City Guard. In spite of Queen Caroline's anger and her threats, the leaders of the gang were never discovered, though stories were told in the old houses of the High Street, for many a year after, of ladies whose sedan chairs were stopped by the mob, being escorted home by men dressed as labourers, with hands that had never worked with tools, or reassured as to their safety by bakers who, though covered with flour, spoke the language of the Assembly and drawing-room.

CHAPTER IX

GREYFRIARS

GREYFRIARS is a grim place, even in sunshine. No wonder "Bluidy Mackenzie" was supposed to arise from his huge mausoleum and wander, a restless, tormented spirit, among the graves, for here, in Greyfriars, Death is undoubtedly spelt with a capital D, a skeleton figure of terrifying aspect, always seeking whom he may devour. As you enter you are faced by the monument of James Borthwick the surgeon, against the eastern wall of the church, a tablet portraying a skeleton rampant, festooned with surgical instruments. The older tombs all bear out much the same idea—skulls, crossbones, hour-glasses, worms, gravediggers' spades meet the eye on all sides. Time has added to the effect. Skeletons have been partly eaten away by the mouldering of the stone, armorial bearings have fallen to the ground, inscriptions have become obliterated, and cherubs' faces have grown grotesquely repellent, with the addition of a beard of soot and grime bestowed upon them by passing centuries. At a later period, when body-snatching was rife, Greyfriars grew a crop of iron bars and cages to keep the occupants quiet within their graves. The hand of time lies heavily even on iron bars, eating into them with rust, breaking them away from the stonework, and playing such-like tricks.

And yet, with the usual inconsistency, there is a strange touch of humanity, very much alive, about

the old burying-ground, for houses hem it in closely on two sides. When Candlemaker Row was first built the level of the graveyard was much lower than it is to-day. Now, owing to three centuries' accumulation of human clay, it has climbed up to the first-floor windows. So it happens that from contemplating the ghastly trophies surrounding a judge of James VI's reign, you find yourself contemplating the kitchen of a slum tenement. Some rather ragged washing dangles over an array of death's heads and cherubs, and Sir George Mackenzie, if he wished to leave his mausoleum, would do so to the sound of scales and exercises played in a neighbouring school.

Long ago, when the old religion held sway, the monastery of the Grey Friars stood at the foot of the hill, fronting the Grassmarket, with outbuildings, gardens and meadow-land stretching southwards towards the Burghmuir. It must have been one of the finest dwellings in Edinburgh, for when James I, the founder, had a body of Franciscans brought here from Cologne, they were so struck with its magnificence that they refused to live in it until specially requested to do so by the Archbishop of St. Andrews. In the next reign, Mary of Gueldres lodged here after arriving at Leith in 1449, preparatory to making her public entry on the day of her wedding with James II. Margaret of Anjou and her son Edward, the Prince of Wales, fleeing to Scotland for shelter after the Lancastrian defeat at Towton, in 1461, were most hospitably received by the city of Edinburgh, and given apartments at the Grey Friars. According to tradition Henry VI came here too, and granted a charter to the citizens, empowering them to trade with England on the most favourable terms, though, as Henry never regained his throne, the charter was as useful as the titles granted by the exiled Stuarts to their faithful followers. When James IV and Mary Tudor entered

Edinburgh the monks were waiting at their gateway bearing their banner, cross and sacred relics, which the royal pair kissed reverently before passing on into the city. Then came the Reformation, and evil days for monks and friars. In 1562 Queen Mary made over the monastery grounds to the Town Council for a burying-ground to take the place of the much-desecrated area behind St. Giles's, and so begins the history of the Greyfriars that we know to-day.

Among the early burials was that of George Buchanan the historian. James Melville describes going to see him at his house in Kennedy's Close just before his death. They found him seated in his room, teaching his servant to read. "Mr. Andro" (uncle of Melville, who accompanied him) said, "I see, sir, ye are not idle." "Better this," quoth he, "nor stealing sheep or sitting idle which is as ill." He then showed his visitors the Dedicatory Epistle to King James, which he had just written for his History. Mr. Andro complained that it was a little obscure in places and needed revision. "I may do na mair," said Buchanan, "for thinking on another matter." "What is that?" asked Mr. Andro. "To die," quoth he, "but I leave that and manie more things for you to help." Melville and his uncle and Mr. Thomas Buchanan then went to the printing-house to see the latest sheets of the History, and found the end of the seventeenth book was reached; "a place which we thought verie hard for the tyme, which might be an occasion for staying the haill work, anent the burial of Davie" (Rizzio). They returned to "Mr. George" again, "and fand him bedfast by his custom." Mr. Thomas, his cousin, pointed out that certain parts of the History might be modified and toned down, otherwise "the King would be offendit with it, and it might stay all the work." "Tell me, man," replied the historian, "gif I have told the truth?"

"Yes," says Mr. Thomas, "sir, I think so." "I will bide his feud and all his kins' then," quoth he. "Pray, pray to God for me, and let Him direct all." "So," concludes Sir James, "by the printing of his Cornicle was endit, that maist learned, wyse, and godly man endit this mortal life."

A notice is put up on the north-eastern slope indicating that Buchanan was buried in that neighbourhood, but his tombstone has long since disappeared, and the actual site of the grave has been lost.

A little farther down the slope is the famous Martyrs' Monument. It is difficult in these days to feel much sympathy with their narrow, gloomy outlook on life, though the courage with which they met their death must win them respectful admiration. One of them, Mr. Guthrie, had a certain grim humour about him. By a curious chance he had "Bluidy Mackenzie," not then the famous man he became later, for his counsel, but no skill availed to secure his pardon, and he was condemned to be hanged at the Cross on June 1, 1661. At his last meal he asked for cheese, of which he was very fond, though for long past he had been forbidden to touch it by his doctor. "They may allow me a little cheese this night, for I think there is no fear of the gravel now," he remarked, and thoroughly enjoyed it.

Near the Martyrs' Monument lie the remains of numerous criminals of all kinds, who were hastily buried here in nameless graves. The Earl of Morton was brought to Greyfriars after his execution, so was Porteous and many another unfortunate, innocent or guilty. Not far from this corner is a monument to Donald Ban Macintyre, which, with its decorations of claymores, targets, salmon spears, skene dhus, and game of all kinds, offers a pleasing contrast to the skulls and cross-bones. A Gaelic poet, of great gifts, according to those who can read his work, he was one of the last surviving

Jacobites, for, having fought at Falkirk for Prince Charlie, he lived on until the year 1812.

It is hardly necessary to say that the event which made Greyfriars famous for all time was the signing of the National Covenant on February 28, 1638. It is also unnecessary to relate how the people trooped to the church, which was packed to such a degree that they adjourned to the churchyard, where they set their signatures to the great piece of parchment, an ell square, laid on a flat tombstone, some of them signing with their own blood as an evidence of their deep sincerity. Unluckily, out of this very fine piece of resistance to illegal despotism grew the Solemn League and Covenant of 1643, which was so disastrous in its effects, binding all those who signed it to resist all those who had not, "while sun and moon endure." As Andrew Lang puts it, "Scotland was once more in the happy posture of Israel of old, and enjoyed a definite legal instrument, binding on all posterity, and regulating the relations between itself and the Creator of the universe. Nothing was absent but the signature of the other high contracting party." In a few years began that most unhappy of religious wars, bringing in its train the Pentland Rising, the executions in the Grassmarket, and the defeat at Bothwell Brig.

It was after Bothwell Brig, in 1679, that the 1,184 prisoners were brought to Edinburgh, and interned in the southern part of the graveyard. In those days it was an open space, surrounded on two sides by Telfer's Wall and extending as far as Bristo Place. No graves were there at that time, and the narrow alley, still called the Covenanters' Prison, only represents a very small part of it. From June until October they were kept there under strong guard, with an allowance from their generous foes of one penny loaf apiece per day, only augmented by the charity of the citizens. Some few escaped, some died of exposure and misery, many of

them were released upon signing a bond not to take up arms against the Government again, and most of the rest were drowned off the Orkneys in the wreck of the ship that was taking them to serve as slaves in the Plantations.

When the Estates declared for the Prince of Orange in April, 1689, Sir George Mackenzie was a ruined man. His public life was over, and Edinburgh was no place for him to live in. Before departing he spent the whole of his last night in Greyfriars, meditating among the tombs. Strange and bitter his meditations must have been, too. For many years after his death his mausoleum was supposed to be haunted, and maybe the story of the old Heriot boy who, escaping from the Tolbooth where he was awaiting execution for burglary, took refuge with Sir George, and there lay hid, living on food brought by friends in Heriot's Hospital, next door, until he could be got out of the country, is not as unlikely as it sounds. At any rate, "Bluidy Mackenzie's" tomb was not a place that would be searched, and any movement or noise heard in that neighbourhood would be attributed to the restless spirit of the Lord Advocate himself.

Near the mausoleum is the burying-ground of the Littles of Over Liberton, in the centre of which is a recumbent female figure under a great canopy, at each of the four corners of which stands another draped effigy. Popular tradition had it that the poor lady had been poisoned by her four daughters, who were thus placed over her in remembrance of their unnatural behaviour. It is to be feared that they are really Faith, Hope and Charity, with Justice thrown in to decorate the fourth corner, but the other idea is certainly more picturesque.

In wandering through Greyfriars one constantly comes across old friends, though the general atmosphere of dilapidation does give them the appearance of being in

reduced circumstances. Next to each other are two men, familiar to us from the pages of Alexander Carlyle's Autobiography, "Bob" Adam the architect, and Principal Robertson, who had been in London with Carlyle on their memorable jaunt in 1758. Another of his friends was Dr. Blair, the celebrated minister of Greyfriars, a tablet to whose memory adorns the south side of the church. The Lord Provost of the '45, James Stewart, who is mentioned severely by Carlyle as being a Jacobite at heart, is buried here, and so is Colin Maclaurin the mathematician, to whom Stewart entrusted the defence of the walls at that time.

Then there is a "Scott group," beginning with his own family burying-ground, where Walter Scott, the novelist's father, and several of the children who succumbed to the dark unhealthiness of College Wynd, are buried. In the Covenanters' Prison the grave of Sir Adam Fergusson, "the merry knight," the cheeriest and most jovial of all Scott's close friends, is marked by a crumbling tablet against the wall. Not far from his grave is that of Lord Blair of Avontoun,* the Lord President, whose death was immediately followed by that of Lord Melville. Lord Cockburn tells us of the general sorrow and grief there was when the news of Blair's death was received. Poor old Lord Hermand, who never could understand why the Lord President remained unmoved by the seductive charms of claret, shed genuine tears that had nothing to do with liquor, when he heard the news. Henry Erskine, the brilliant, graceful speaker, who could always be trusted to say a few well-chosen words upon any subject, on any occasion, broke down completely when it came to paying a tribute to the Lord President's worth. He "tried to say something, and because he could only try it, it was as good a speech as he ever made." Henry Mackenzie, the author of "The Man of Feeling" and

* See page 150.

"The Man of the World," books which were just as much alive in Scott's young days as they are dead now, is buried in Greyfriars, so is Joseph Black, the famous chemist, a gentle old man who died, seated in his chair with a bowl of milk on his knee, so peacefully that not a drop was spilt.

Greyfriars has the memory of Scott's first love-affair in its keeping, for it was on coming out of the church one wet Sunday morning that he was allowed to offer his umbrella to Miss Margaret Stewart and escort her home. That was the beginning of a long and hopeless quest. Scott was smitten to the heart by her charms, but he had nothing to offer her as yet except his heart. The fates were against him, for she eventually married Sir William Forbes of Pitsligo, and there terminated the little romance, which Scott, at any rate, never forgot.

Then there are many other familiar names that one comes across. Alexander Henderson, the Covenanting divine, lies near to William Carstares, who rose to such favour under William of Orange, and had such influence where Scottish affairs were concerned that he received the nickname of "Cardinal" Carstares. One invaluable asset of the Cardinal's was that he knew how to hold his tongue, an asset of which he gave good proof when he was tortured in the troublous "Killing Times." For upwards of an hour he bore thumbscrews, refusing to give one iota of information to the Privy Council, though the screws were forced down so hard that a smith had to be sent for to undo them with his tools. Even Dutch William, who seldom waxed enthusiastic, was so struck by the story that he sent for a pair of thumbscrews and had them tried on his own fingers, vowing, as he felt the pressure, that he would reveal anything at the end of a minute.

On the same side are the tombs, so hardly dealt with by time, of Walter Chiesley of Dalry, father of

the George Chiesley who was hanged for shooting Lord President Lockhart at the head of Old Bank Close (now swept away) in the Lawnmarket, and grandfather of Lady Grange who suffered so severely for the mad uncontrollable temper she inherited; of the Byres of Coates, who gave their name to Byres Close, and whose country dwelling was the picturesque old mansion of Easter Coates, now enclosed in the Cathedral grounds; of Bannatyne the antiquarian; of the Foulis of Ravelston, and of other families, great in their day, who helped to make the history of Edinburgh.

On the opposite side of the churchyard is a modest headstone marking the grave of Catherine Wilson, the first wife of Francis Jeffrey, who married him when his income was less than £100 a year, saw his struggles in Buccleuch Place, and died in 1805, when the "Edinburgh Review" was bringing him into fame.

Another headstone recalls Alexander Deuchar, well known in the latter half of the eighteenth century as an engraver of seals. Born and bred a Forfarshire farmer, it was a curious turn of fate that turned his footsteps in the direction of art. His hobby, from boyhood, had been collecting stones (garnets, cairngorms, agates, etc.), which he kept, uncut, in barrels in an outhouse. During the disturbances of 1745 a band of Highlanders raided his farm, drove off his cattle and looted his house. There being little hope of redress, Deuchar found himself a ruined man, with no capital to stock another farm. All that was left to him was his collection of stones, which the Highlanders passed over as mere rubbish. As a last resource he took them by sea to Edinburgh, and asked a friend there to help him in selling them to a lapidary. Just then pebble buttons and brooches were in great demand, and the friend suggested that instead of selling the pebbles rough, he should turn lapidary himself. Deuchar accepted the advice, learnt the trade, set up a mill

for himself at Croft-an-righ, close to Holyrood, and in due course became a very prosperous lapidary and seal-engraver. His son, David Deuchar,* who was trained in the same business, added etching to seal-engraving, and has a still greater claim to fame, so far as the present day is concerned, by having been the first to " discover " Raeburn.

Wandering about in Greyfriars and trying to decipher the half-illegible inscriptions is very fascinating, but space is short, and we must pass on our way, leaving the reader to delve further into the past for himself if he is so minded.

Next to the churchyard is that very fine building, Heriot's Hospital, which " Jingling Geordie " bestowed upon his native town " for the education, nursing and upbringing of youth, being puir orphans and fatherless children of decayet burgesses and freemen of the said burgh, destitute, and left without means." Heriot lives for ever in " The Fortunes of Nigel," as well as in his bequest, and all the stories of his dealings with the sagacious James VI are too well known to make it necessary to chronicle them again. It was in 1623 that the goldsmith died, and in 1628 the foundations of the Hospital were laid, though, owing to the difficulties of the times, it was not to be completed for many years. In 1639 operations were brought to a standstill because the tenants of the lands in which the funds were vested could not pay their rent. This difficulty appears to have been got over in time, for building began again in 1642. In the course of a few more years it was finished, but its troubles were not over yet. Cromwell decided that it would make an excellent military hospital, and had the wounded from Dunbar brought there. It served this purpose so well that the soldiers did not depart finally until 1658, when Monk was persuaded by the governors to set up a hospital elsewhere.

* See page 41.

At last, on April 11, 1659, old George Heriot's wishes were fulfilled. Heriot's Hospital received its first thirty boys, and from that day to this, in ever-increasing numbers, generation after generation of boys have passed through the gateway to the fine old building with its quaintly-ornamented windows, numerous turrets, heirs to the generosity and sound business instincts of King James's goldsmith.

CHAPTER X

GEORGE SQUARE

THERE is one place in Edinburgh where the ghosts of the eighteenth century could return in the dusk of a winter's afternoon, just before the lamps are lighted, and feel themselves perfectly at home. That place is George Square, which, except for its almost entirely rebuilt north side, retains all the peace and dignity of an age of wigs and cravats, hooped dresses and sedan chairs. And the ghosts themselves, what an illustrious group they would be! Old Admiral Duncan of Camperdown fame (who, however, would look in vain for his house, No. 5, which now forms part of the Medical School), Braxfield, Henry Erskine, Scott, Dundas of Arniston, Sir Ralph Abercromby, Dr. Adam of the High School, and a host of others, all well-known men of that day.

Beginning on the west side, the first house of interest is No. 22, and here we inconsistently leave the eighteenth century, and go on to the nineteenth. This was the house of John Bradfute, partner in Bell and Bradfute, the celebrated publishing firm, and in that house took place the more or less clandestine meetings between Jane Welsh, the clever, spoilt, nerve-ridden doctor's daughter from Haddington, and Thomas Carlyle, the clumsy, badly-dressed youth from Dumfriesshire. It was a strange courtship with a classroom atmosphere about it, for both the lad and the lass took themselves deadly seriously, and Carlyle, however much in love,

could never quite refrain from playing the part of a schoolmaster with an intelligent pupil. All the same, those early years (the first meeting in George Square took place in November, 1821, when Jane Welsh was staying with Eliza Stoddart, Mr. Bradfute's niece) with their frequent letters and occasional meetings, depending largely on Mrs. Welsh's moods, and the insistence upon work and study so much more in evidence than the lighter, happier side of life, must have seemed a brighter period to the Sage of Chelsea than the attainments and disappointments of later years.

After this one digression we turn back to the eighteenth century again at No. 24, Henry Erskine's house. At a time when a difference in politics not only rendered high office unattainable, but cut through private friendships relentlessly, the charming, witty, kindly Henry Erskine was almost the only Whig in Edinburgh who could look for a warm welcome in Tory drawing-rooms. "Nothing was so sour as not to be sweetened by the glance, the voice, the gaiety, the beauty, of Henry Erskine." "He reasoned in wit." "He had a radiant spirit within him." In such terms did Lord Cockburn describe the man he admired so much. "He was the best-natured man I ever knew," said Scott. As a lawyer he stood at the top of the tree, so that "wherever there was a litigant, civil, criminal, fiscal, or ecclesiastic, there was a desire for Henry Erskine; despair if he was lost—confidence if he was secured." His sense of humour was proverbial. He it was who amazed the complacent Boswell, when he met him showing Dr. Johnson to Edinburgh, by pressing a shilling into his hand, whispering that it was "for the sight of your bear," and passing on. Even the Bench enjoyed listening to Erskine, so much so that when, on one occasion, he began with "I shall be brief, my Lords," a judge hastily put in, "Hoots, man Harry, dinna be brief—

dinna be brief," a compliment that not many advocates can have received. Binding all these qualities together, wit, brains, good looks, good voice and kindliness, was that charm of personality, so impossible to describe, and yet the one touch without which a portrait is a mere list of features. The ghost that returned to No. 24 George Square would be curiously graceful and attractive.

Next door to Henry Erskine old lived Walter Scott, the stern, rigidly upright W.S. A strong Tory, his neighbour's principles were anathema to him, but Erskine could never make enemies, and the two lived on friendly enough terms with each other. The Whig's splendid yellow chariot and black horses were lodged in the Tory's stables, and the offspring of the Tory, Walter Scott the second, a small child with a lame leg, who could hardly speak plainly, was for ever trying to get into the Whig house next door, to the great annoyance of Mrs. Erskine, who used to refer to the future author and poet as " that silly, tiresome little boy."

One of the ghostly appearances in George Square would certainly be the sedan which brought a " person carefully muffled up in a mantle " to see Mr. Scott, senior, every evening at the same hour. Who does not remember the story of Mrs. Scott's curiosity, which, as her husband would give her no information about the stranger, led her to walk boldly into his private room one day with tea for the visitor in one of her best cups? The person " of distinguished appearance " accepted it gratefully, but Scott said not a word, and offered no introduction. When he had finished the tea the visitor took his leave, and then it was that Mr. Scott, opening the study window, flung the empty cup out on to the street, where it lay smashed to atoms. In reply to his wife's exclamations he made the following crushing speech : " I can forgive your little curiosity, madam, but you must pay the penalty. I may admit

into my house on a piece of business persons wholly unworthy to be treated as guests by my wife. Neither lip of me nor of mine comes after Mr. Murray of Broughton." Pompous though he was, there was something fine about the old man. Meanwhile the lame boy, who must have heard what had happened, abstracted the saucer and hung it in the little sitting-room he had made for himself down in the area and there kept the curious little memento of Prince Charlie's treacherous secretary, as one of his most treasured possessions.

But to go on detailing stories of Sir Walter Scott's home would mean swelling the chronicle of George Square to altogether abnormal proportions, and, thanks to Lockhart, all these stories are too well known already to need chronicling at all, so we will pass on to some of the other houses.

No. 27 was bought by Sir Ralph Abercromby in 1788, and here he lived in the intervals of active service until his death at the Battle of Aboukir in 1801.

No. 28 was the home of that essentially Scotch character, Lord Braxfield. Familiar to us all through numerous anecdotes, through his picture, a masterpiece of Raeburn's, in the Parliament House, and through the unfinished "Weir of Hermiston," one feels that Braxfield, with his rough, unpolished manner, his legal knowledge, his dry humour, and his fiery temper too, ought to have belonged to one of those dark closes leading down the hill from the High Street. Cockburn, who detested both the man and his politics, never had a good word to say for him. There is his oft-quoted description of the "Hanging Judge"—"Strong-built and dark, with rough eyebrows, powerful eyes, threatening lips, and a low growling voice, he was like a formidable blacksmith. . . . Illiterate and without any taste for refined enjoyment, strength of understanding, which gave him power without cultivation, only encouraged him to a more contemptuous disdain of all

natures less coarse than his own. Despising the growing improvement of manners, he shocked the feelings even of an age which, with more of the formality, had far less of the substance of decorum than our own." The case, thus stated, certainly looks black against him, yet that same Braxfield was the "Robbie Macqueen" for whom his class-mates in past days would have fought to the bitter end, on account of the "honesty and good nature which made him a general favourite." Ramsay of Ochtertyre, who knew the man well and did not hesitate to condemn his "reprehensible ebullitions of speech," also enlarges upon his "vigorous comprehensive mind, warm affections and communicative disposition," adding that he never failed to have as large a number of people attached to his heart as to his brain.

The fact of the matter seems to have been that Braxfield had that irresistible sense of humour which, if it does not make all the world akin, certainly does cover a multitude of sins and warms the hearts of all those to whom it appeals. His exclamation, "What a glorious thing it is to speak nonsense!" draws down a reproof from Cockburn, firstly because it was a most improper sentiment, and secondly because it was bad grammar, and yet—the world would be a gloomier place than it is without the nonsense. Braxfield drank like a fish, swore like a trooper, damned his partner at whist and apologized to her, saying he forgot for the moment she was not his wife, told stories that even in those days were not considered fit for repetition, loathed Whigs, was extraordinarily brutal to political prisoners, despised poets and philosophers, but, for all that, there was something attractive about him, and his ghost, with eyes that twinkle under the bushy eyebrows, would not be the least pleasing of those who congregate about these eighteenth-century doorsteps.

Passing on to the south side of the square, No. 39

was Dr. Alexander Adam's house. For the man himself we go to the National Gallery, where Raeburn's portrait of him indicates the characteristics that won the affections of Scott, Jeffrey, Cockburn, and so many other old High School boys. He was a man who had fought his way up the steep path of learning with that dogged courage and determination to overcome every obstacle so typical of the Scottish character. Turning to the pages of Lord Cockburn once more, one reads that when Adam was a student at the University " he lodged in a small room at Restalrig . . . for which he paid fourpence per week. All his meals, except dinner, uniformly consisted of oatmeal porridge, together with small beer, of which he allowed himself half a bottle at a time. When he wished to dine he purchased a penny loaf at the nearest baker's shop ; and if the day was fair he would dispatch his meal in a walk to the Meadows ; but, if the weather was foul, he had recourse to some long and lonely stair, which he would climb, eating his dinner at every step. . . . When he was chill he used to run till his blood began to glow ; and his studies were always prosecuted under the roof of some one or other of his companions." No wonder there were " characters " in those days such as the easier conditions of to-day could never make.

Once the climb was over Adam's life seems to have been singularly happy, for " he was born to teach Latin, some Greek, and all virtue." Verifying a quotation, or seeking the meaning of some difficult obscure passage, was his idea of relaxation and amusement. Even the odium which he brought down upon his head, by some comparisons between the French Revolution and the events of ancient history, cannot have disturbed him much, for what was the meaning of such nicknames as Whig or Tory to a man who lived entirely among the great ones of Greece or Rome ? His death was as happy as his life. When an old man he was struck

with palsy while taking his class at the High School. A few days later, even as the darkness of death came over him, he harked back in semi-consciousness to his work, and with the words, "It is getting dark, boys; we must put off the rest till to-morrow," died in great peace.

At No. 53, on the east side of the square, lived Lady Don, who still disputes with Miss Jeannie Elliott, author of one verson of "The Flowers of the Forest," the honour of having been the last inhabitant of Edinburgh to own a sedan chair. It stood in the lobby of No. 53, resplendent with silk, velvet and gilding. She always used it for going to the Tron Church on Sundays, and many a passer-by stopped to catch a glimpse of the old lady with the well-cut aristocratic features, white hair, and mittened hands which allowed a sight of the slender fingers and old-fashioned rings, as her two liveried chairmen bore her along the Potterrow, down the Horse Wynd to the Cowgate and up the hill on the other side to the Tron, where some one was always in readiness to step forward and help her to descend.

At No. 56 lived Lord Blair, the Lord President, and next door, at No. 57, was Robert Dundas of Arniston, the Lord Chief Baron. The former was the son of the author of "The Grave," and held the respect of all, whether Whig or Tory. So little eager was he for office that George III used to call him "the man who would not go up." There was no pushing or jostling about Blair, either metaphorical or actual. In the Parliament House there was one particular line of the floor up and down which he walked, taking little notice of what was going on around him. Those who wished for his advice knew where to find him, and came to him, but he never went one step out of his way to get work. As a judge he was courteous, dignified and learned, with none of Hermand's drinking bouts, Eskgrove's silliness, or Braxfield's brutal impatience,

but no man knew more of law than he. Even the impetuous John Clerk of Eldin, upon hearing all his arguments demolished by the grave reasoning of Lord Blair, was heard to mutter *sotto voce*, "My man! God Almighty spared nae pains when he made your brains!" Blair's neighbour in George Square, Robert Dundas of Arniston, was a man almost bound to make a name for himself in the legal world. The son of one Lord President, the grandson of another, and the nephew of Lord Melville, his career was thrust upon him in his cradle. Lord Melville was a frequent visitor at George Square, and it was in his nephew's house that the great man, the friend of Pitt, the admired of the Tories, the execrated of the Whigs, the virtual ruler of Scotland, died suddenly in May, 1811, two or three days after Lord Blair. Indeed it was to attend Blair's funeral that he had come to Edinburgh. He went to bed perfectly well one evening and was found dead next morning, with only the wall dividing him from the body of his friend, the Lord President, in the next house. Among the papers in his room was a letter addressed to a member of the Government, giving a magnificent rhetorical account of Blair's funeral, which had not yet taken place, and what his own feelings were on seeing his friend laid to rest in Greyfriars churchyard, all written in advance, ready to be sent off as soon as the funeral was over, with a view to getting some Government pension for the family who were none too well provided for. It was a kindly act, and one feels that death played a scurvy trick upon Lord Melville, catching him out thus suddenly, and exposing the tricks of the trade to the vulgar eye, like a slice of onion falling out of the handkerchief of an over-zealous mourner.

In the neighbourhood of George Square is a network of remarkably dull streets, the last efforts of the Old Town at expansion, which provide a few links in the

chain of eighteenth-century history. At No. 7 Charles Street, leading out of George Square on the north, Francis Jeffrey was born in 1773. In Crichton Street, on the east side, lived Mrs. Cockburn, author of one version of "The Flowers of the Forest," a strong-minded, shrewd woman, possessed of the dry humour which was so typical of old Edinburgh. Her reply to the invitation of a lady who, though willing enough to receive her friends, seldom took the trouble of going to see them, is masterly. "Mrs. Cockburn's compliments to Mr. and Mrs. Chalmers. Would wait on them with a great deal of pleasure, but finds herself at a loss, as Mrs. Chalmers sets her an example of never coming from home, and as there is nobody she admires more, she wishes to imitate her in everything." The same shrewdness and common sense, so sensible that it was not without pathos, was hers to the last. When the eighteenth century and she were nearing an end together, the old lady (she was born in 1712) writes, "As for me, I sit in my black chair, weak, old, and contented. Though my body is not portable, I visit you in my prayers and in my cups."

The opening on the south side of George Square leads into Buccleuch Place, with its double row of tall, uncompromising houses, the very essence of dull solidity in stone. There is a tablet above the door of No. 18, recording the fact that Jeffrey lived here from 1801–1802, and that it was in this house that the "Edinburgh Review" came into being. The young Whig lawyer of flashing eyes and rather sneering mouth, with prospects of which the less he said the better, brought a wife here in 1801. Brougham said that it was "a bold step," for the bride was penniless, and the bridegroom's income was rather less than £100 a year. However, it was wonderful what could be done in those days, and their flat, on the third floor, must have seen plenty of cheery gatherings, though high thinking

certainly went hand-in-hand with plain living. It was at one of these said gatherings, upon a stormy March evening in 1802, that Sydney Smith suggested to Jeffrey the possibility of a Whig Review. The idea was taken up with enthusiasm. Sydney himself was to edit the first number; Jeffrey, Horner, Brougham, and other young Whigs capable of using their pens for their political creed, were pressed into the service, and the result of that windy evening was the paper which burst like a bombshell in the peaceful, drowsy abodes of the Tories, scattering jagged fragments of abuse all around at first, but establishing finally a new literary reputation for Edinburgh.

On the same side of the street, a little east of the Jeffreys' house, are three doors close together, Nos. 14, 15, 16, the middle of which is still surmounted by a plain iron lamp bracket, innocent, for a century past most likely, of any lamp. Somewhere about the year 1787 the Assembly Rooms in George Street were built, to the horror of the upholders of old-fashioned ball-room discipline, who looked upon the New Town and all its ways as fraught with both moral and physical danger, from continental licence and revolutionary ideas, down to the possibility of being blown, sedan and all, over the balustrade of the North Bridge. It was obvious, even to them, that the good old days of Assembly Close and Bell's Wynd were numbered, but they determined to make a last stand in the region of George Square. Buccleuch Place was chosen as a suitable rallying-point, and thus arose the last of the Assembly Rooms of the Old Town, in this building now divided into flats. For a time all went well. The lamp-bracket over the door was not empty in those days, and the light shone upon the last of the eighteenth-century dowagers, with their beaux of past days, whose wrinkled faces gave the lie to their neat tie-wigs and old-fashioned bright-coloured coats. For a time juniors

bowed meekly beneath the iron rod of discipline, but the tide was too strong. In a little while Buccleuch Place was left desolate, and all the light and gaiety centred round George Street. The dowagers, in their turn, bowed to the inevitable. Their rule was over, and they themselves, lamenting the decay of manners and modes, passed gracefully into oblivion.

Leaving Buccleuch Place and turning to the left, a few yards brings us to Chapel Street and the Buccleuch Church, formerly a chapel-of-ease to St. Cuthbert's. North of the church, and enclosed by a high wall over which the tops of tombstones can just be seen, is a small graveyard where Mrs. Cockburn, old Dr. Adam of the High School, Blacklock, the blind poet, and other inhabitants of this once fashionable suburb, are buried. On the same side of the street, a little farther to the north still, is Windmill Street, the dwelling-place of one of the strangest of those old Scotch ladies who arose from the gloomy first half of the century—Sophia Johnson, always known as Suphy or The Suff.

When Suphy was a child, her father, the drunken Laird of Hilton, discovered in a flash of after-dinner inspiration that education was the curse of the age, and that therefore his daughter should have none. He kept his word, and Suphy grew up in the kitchen and stables. The butler finally taught her to read, the stable-boys gave her instruction in fighting and swearing, while she learnt how to saddle or shoe a horse from the coachman. The feminine element seems to have had no place in the Laird of Hilton's establishment; Suphy's clothes, even, were masculine; all her life she wore a man's hat, a long greatcoat, worsted stockings, and thick leather shoes with large brass buckles. Added to this was a deep voice like a man's, a contempt for womankind, a strong, undeveloped mind, a touch of humour and sarcasm, a kind heart, and a considerable dread of the supernatural. A good

deal of her time was spent in visiting, when, a law unto herself, she would arrive when she chose, and stay as long as she chose. Paying little attention to general conversation as a rule, she would sit, hat, greatcoat and shoes well to the fore, with a book held close up to her eyes, until she heard something she disliked. Down would go the book, and her deep voice would be heard: "Surely that is very great nonsense, sir," after which, if the speaker was wise enough to say no more, she resumed her reading. It was a pity that she and Dr. Johnson never met!

Her home in Windmill Street was a small flat, in which she lived with her one servant. On Sundays this servant usually went out for the day, locking Suphy into the house, at the latter's special order, and taking away the key. This saved the old lady the bother of getting up and opening the door if anyone came, for after knocking awhile in vain they gave it up and went away. On the other hand, she had a hole bored in the door, so that she could see who was there and talk to her visitors through it if she felt so inclined, while by refusing to answer she could send them away when she was tired of them.

Opposite Windmill Street is West Nicholson Street. It was in a flat, just at the corner, opposite Buccleuch Chapel, that Thomas Blacklock came to live in 1764, when his career as a minister was cut short by blindness. Although his poetry is of little interest at the present day, he was a well-known *littérateur* at that time. It was a letter from him to Burns, when the Ayrshire poet's first volume appeared, that made the latter relinquish his emigration scheme, and come to Edinburgh instead, where he received a warm welcome and many introductions from Blacklock. Dr. Johnson took tea at his little flat in 1773, and in earlier days, when David Hume, under censure of the Committee of the Advocates' Library for having got certain French books

for it on his own authority, wished to have unofficial access to the books, he gave both the title and the salary as librarian to the blind Blacklock, while he himself did the active work.

A little way down West Nicholson Street, on the north side, is a pend leading to Palmer's Buildings, in an attic in which the painter Runciman lived, and here it was that Robert Ferguson the poet, whose life was such a tragedy, sat to him as the model for the Prodigal Son. Another painter lived here after Runciman, David Wilkie, in the days before he rose to fame, when Palmer's Buildings seemed palatial after the hovel in Paul Street, near the Pleasance, which was his first essay in Edinburgh lodgings.

At the head of Chapel Street the road forks. That on the right is the Potterrow, originally one of the most important entrances to the city, though, except for its narrowness, few traces are left of its earlier history, and that on the left is Bristo Street leading to what was once the Bristo Port. The opening between Nos. 44 and 46 takes the place of the old archway leading into what was formerly General's Entry, where Mrs. McLehose, the "Clarinda" of Burns, had a little flat. She met the poet at Miss Nimmo's in Alison Square, and their mutual attraction resulted in the famous Clarinda-Sylvander correspondence. She was still living in General's Entry fifty years after that meeting—an old lady well over eighty to whom Burns was a pleasing reminiscence of past days.

Lothian Street, the first turning to the right, saw the last, rather sordid years of Thomas De Quincey. His lodgings were in No. 44, where a widow, her sister and niece acted as guardian angels to the dilapidated genius, saving him from disaster, when, heavy with opium, he would upset his candle on to his papers, buying him new clothes piece by piece, now a pair of socks, now a coat, so that De Quincey never noticed any change,

and looking after him in his old age, for in spite of taking opium as freely as other men took claret, he lived to be seventy-four.

In the cul-de-sac called the Bristo Port, where fragments of the town wall still remain, stood the old George Inn, from which, in the last quarter of the eighteenth century, coaches used to set out for Carlisle and London three times a week, and to Glasgow and Greenock every day. Many passengers arriving from the south had their ideas of Scotland's barbarous customs confirmed, when they got their first glimpse of dishevelled, bare-legged, serving lasses at the George, and hastened to depart in search of more inviting quarters elsewhere.

CHAPTER XI

THE CITY WALLS

UNTIL the reign of James II, the city of Edinburgh relied entirely upon the Castle for protection. The houses were of no great value, and the non-combatant part of the population was but little considered. By 1450 the increasing importance of the place led to the necessity of greater security, and so the first wall arose. On the north side the Nor' Loch was deemed sufficient protection, though the Well-House Tower, the ruins of which are the only surviving relics of these early fortifications, was built to guard its western extremity. Then came the Castle, which, of course, had its own ramparts, and the wall proper was only begun on its southern slope. From there it led to the West Bow, where the main entrance to the city was made. From this gateway it ran between the High Street and what is now the Cowgate, on the slope of the hill, where some fragments of it were found when the Law Courts were built in 1844. Then, with a sharp turn northward across the ridge, it closed the High Street at the Netherbow, and joined the eastern end of the Nor' Loch, at a point where the North British Railway runs to-day. There were practically no houses beyond these boundaries, except the independent suburb of the Canongate, which was considered sufficiently protected by the Abbey of Holyrood.

Time passed on, and the population of Edinburgh

continued to grow. The area within the wall was absurdly small, and though there were always plenty of raids on the Border, and plenty of disturbances caused by the great barons, the capital city was put to no serious danger by either one or the other. The deep valley outside the walls on the south side offered plenty of room for expansion: probably one citizen more adventurous than the rest built a house there, and his example was soon followed by others. Ere long the Cowgate and Grassmarket were two very important adjuncts to the town.

Then, like a thunderclap, came the news of the defeat at Flodden. In spite of the bold proclamation by the magistrates that all the men should get their weapons ready "for the keeping and defens of the town aganis thame that wald invaid the samyn," Edinburgh must have fallen had the English army followed up its victory by marching north. It was absolutely necessary to bring the houses on the south side of the town within the lines of defence, and so, in hot haste, the Flodden Wall was begun.

Starting as before, from the southern slope of the Castle rock, it crossed the Grassmarket at the western end, where a new gateway, the West Port, was made, to replace the former entrance at the West Bow, and went straight up the hill on the other side, where, in the Vennel, a considerable portion of it is to be seen to-day. Not far from the top of the Vennel is a tower, the only one remaining of the many which protected the angles of the wall. South of this tower the wall rises higher than ever, but we are not concerned with that at the moment, as it is a later addition. From the tower the wall turned sharply eastward (the present northern boundary of Heriot's Hospital grounds marks its course) until it reached Greyfriars, where it took the line of the present western and southern walls of the churchyard, excluding the Covenanters' Prison. From Greyfriars

it crossed what is now Forrest Road, and, at the present Bristo Street, another gateway was made, the Greyfriars, or Bristo Port, one of the main entrances from the south. Between Nos. 5 and 7 Forrest Road is a narrow division, now filled in with brickwork. This marks the spot where the wall, leaving Greyfriars, made its way to the Bristo Port. A fragment of it still remains in the cul-de-sac on the left, and then it disappears from view behind the Royal Scottish Museum, where a considerable portion of it was recently uncovered.

Between the Museum and the University runs a narrow lane crossed by a bridge, known as West College Street. Close to this bridge was the Kirk-o'-Field, or Potterrow Port. The site of the University, it must be remembered, and the ground opposite to it on the other side of Nicholson Street, nearly as far as Roxburgh Place, was formerly the site of the Collegiate Church and grounds of Our Lady-in-the-Field. From the Potterrow Port the wall practically followed what is now the south side of the University, and crossed Nicholson Street (then, of course, non-existent), following the line of Drummond Street. On the north side of the last-named street, near its juncture with Nicholson Street, there was a small doorway in the wall, leading to the Prebendal House of the Kirk-o'-Field, the house where Darnley lay ill with smallpox and was murdered on the night of February 9, 1567. It was through this door that the murderers took the bodies of Darnley and his page when they threw them into the field beyond the walls.

Drummond Street has a considerable amount of the old wall to show, including at its easternmost end the site of a tower, like the one in the Vennel. At this tower it took another sharp turn northwards, and, passing behind the row of houses that now forms the western side of the Pleasance, reached the Cowgate,

THE VENNEL: SHOWING REMAINS OF CITY WALL

where another gate, the Blackfriars or Cowgate Port, was made. From here the houses on the west side of St. Mary's Wynd were considered sufficient protection, and no building was done until the great Netherbow Port was made. Going northwards, the western houses of Leith Wynd served the purpose of a wall, and at the foot of the hill it joined the wall round Trinity College Church, bringing that building within the lines, and circling round, joined the eastern end of the Nor' Loch again.

One result of this hastily-built wall was that for well over two centuries hardly a house rose outside its boundaries. The citizens, determined not to be caught napping again, decided that the town's growth should be in a perpendicular, instead of a horizontal direction, hence the great towering lands which, like those around the Parliament Close, rose, on the Cowgate side, ten or twelve stories into the air.

About the year 1636 the latest addition to the walls was finished. Returning to the tower in the Vennel, which formed the south-west angle of the Flodden Wall, we see that the present wall, of considerable height and in excellent repair, carries the line much farther south, and includes Heriot's Hospital, instead of shutting it out. This is Telfer's Wall, a far better piece of workmanship, though it lacks the interest of the other, which turned sharply eastwards at Lauriston Place, and followed the line of the street along Teviot Place as far as Bristo Street, where it turned back to the north again, joining the Flodden Wall at Bristo Port. Thus, not only Heriot's Hospital, but the newer addition to Greyfriars churchyard, now called the Covenanters' Prison (which included the sites of Forrest Road and all the houses as far as Bristo Place in the seventeenth century), were safely enfolded within the fortifications.

Perhaps it is just as well the walls never were used for

defensive purposes. In 1745 Provost Stewart, strongly suspected of Jacobite proclivities, and chief of the trained bands of Edinburgh, gave orders that the walls should be put into repair at once, and cannon brought from the ships at Leith to defend the town. Colin Maclurin, the mathematician, was put in charge of the work, but the difficulties were wellnigh insuperable. Men could not be got to do the repairs, and materials were scarce. If cannon were to be mounted on the walls, then platforms and embrasures must be made for them, since the early builders had omitted to include such things in their scheme of defence. However, the walls never were put to the test of a siege. The day before Prince Charlie arrived at Holyrood, the magistrates sent out a deputation to meet him at Corstorphine to ask for terms. The answer was: Immediate surrender of the town. Late at night another deputation went out in a hackney coach, and, equally unsuccessful, returned in the early hours of the morning. Meanwhile the Prince sent a body of troops under Lochiel, via Merchiston and Hope Park, to the Netherbow Port. Just as they arrived (it was about five in the morning) the coach which had brought the deputation back came lumbering down the High Street on its way to the stables in the Canongate. The Netherbow Port was opened to let it pass, and the Highlanders, seizing their opportunity, rushed in, overpowered the guard, and took possession, not only of the gate, but of the whole town as well, without firing a shot.

After 1745 there was little more trouble taken about the walls. Expansion was talked of instead, and squares grew up beyond the town boundaries in the south. Ere long the walls were broken down in a dozen different places, a process that was carried on until the work of the city fathers, planned out in such desperation, was reduced to the few fragments one sees to-day.

CHAPTER XII

PRINCES STREET

THE key to the New Town is the North Bridge, and a difficult key it was to make. Not many years had elapsed since the '45, when discussions on the subject of town improvements began. Sir Gilbert Elliot of Minto in 1752 drew attention to the mediæval conditions still prevailing in the capital of Scotland, but for eleven years nothing was done. The two words "Extended Royalty" stuck in the throats of all those citizens who regarded the High Street as the most splendid thoroughfare in the kingdom, and the Canongate as the ideal aristocratic quarter. The year 1763 saw the enterprising George Drummond made Lord Provost, and with the canniness that marks his countrymen, he set to work upon a great scheme of expansion. If the city gates were to be flung wide open for all time, a bridge over the valley was the key with which to do it. If "Extended Royalty" was as obnoxious to his fellow-citizens as the Book of Common Prayer had been to their forbears, then "Extended Royalty" should be mentioned as little as possible. They were told that a bridge was to be built to increase the facilities for transport with Leith, so, on October 21, the old Nor' Loch having been drained, the Lord Provost laid the foundation-stone. After that there was more delay. The mob took the opportunity of pelting Drummond's coach in the High Street, and the wise shook their heads over the futility of the whole pro-

ceeding, pointing out that New Street and St. John Street in the Canongate, and the rapidly arising Brown Square and Argyle Square on the south side of the city, were quite sufficient expansion for any one.

For two years nothing more was done, but in 1765 the contract was given to William Mylne, descendant of the famous old family of master masons, whose name is perpetuated in Mylne's Court and on their monument in Greyfriars. The bridge was to be completed by Martinmas 1769, and on the strength of that one or two daring spirits began building houses on the north side of the valley. The magistrates, by way of blandishment, offered a twenty-pound premium to the first householder in the Extended Royalty, which was won by a Mr. John Young, who ventured upon a house in what afterwards became Rose Court, behind St. Andrew's Church in George Street. The first house in Princes Street (now No. 10, the Crown Hotel) was to be free of burghal taxation, and the feu-duties on those built later were so low as to be little more than nominal. In 1768 the foundation-stone of the Theatre Royal was laid by David Ross, the manager of the old Canongate Theatre. The huge pile of the General Post Office has long since taken the place of the theatre where Mrs. Siddons made her first appearance in Scotland, and all the great actors and actresses of the nineteenth century have appeared. In previous days, when the North Bridge had not even begun to exist, the site of the theatre was a piece of open ground which George Whitefield, the preacher, considered as consecrated to himself, since he had held his open-air meeting there on various occasions. His anger and horror when he returned and found his favourite spot polluted by the trail of the serpent, the mark of the beast, the Devil's standard, and the servants of Satan, was terrible to behold.

To return to the bridge itself. In August, 1769, just

as the work was practically completed, one of the pillars at the south end gave way, owing to an error in digging the foundations, and down came that part of the bridge with a crash, bringing five unfortunate people with it. The opposition side were soberly jubilant at finding the key broken at the very moment the door was to be opened. Those three or four impetuous hotheads who had built their houses on a bleak wind-swept moor, and were now cut off from shops, friends, churches and amusements by the steep muddy valley, were justly punished for their folly. As to Mr. Ross and his theatre, Whitefield was avenged, for the approach, down Halkerston's or Leith Wynd, and up the hill on the other side, was so difficult and dangerous at night that the unlucky manager, after carrying on for one year of dismal failure, leased it to the celebrated Samuel Foote in 1770. However, the bridge was repaired at last. In 1772 it was opened for all traffic and the way lay ready for the New Town. But like the traditional prisoner of the Bastille, the inhabitants of Edinburgh were so attached to their insanitary closes and dark stairs that there was no great exodus from the city at first. However, after watching their more adventurous neighbours for a while, they were tempted to do likewise. One after another they bought their sites. House followed house, and so at last Princes Street came into being, following the line of the old Lang Dykes along which Claverhouse led his men, after his break with the Convention in 1689, when the magistrates anxiously watched his departure, uncertain what his next move was going to be.

The original idea was that this new thoroughfare should be called St. Giles's Street after the patron saint of the town, but here, unexpectedly, George III put his foot down. Firmly convinced that the Town Council of Edinburgh intended to name this youngest child of theirs after the very unsavoury quarter of

London known as St. Giles, he rapped out with his usual jerky iteration, "What! What! What's that! St. Giles's Street! Never do! Never do!" so, to satisfy him, St. Giles was relegated to the background once more and the Princes, George and James, became the tutelary deities of the New Town. Princes Street has changed greatly in its progress from youth to maturity, and though nothing can alter its magnificent features—the long sloping ridge of the Old Town, with its irregular crest of chimneys and gables, terminating in the castle of many memories mounted high on the rock which is as rugged and picturesque as its own history—the changes have not been for the better so far as its looks are concerned. In its earlier years a long row of houses, more or less uniform as to size, stretched from one end to the other, untroubled by noise and smoke, those twin curses of modern town life. One or two still remain, fronted almost out of recognition with huge plate-glass windows, but most of them are as much things of the past as the Luckenbooths and the Netherbow Port.

There is one thing, however, that modern Edinburgh has brought us, noise and smoke notwithstanding—the lights of a town! Stevenson described the lights as seen from the Calton Hill in as fine a piece of descriptive writing as any he ever penned, and many others have drawn attention to the lighted windows of the Old Town as seen from the New, but there is an effect to be caught from the upper windows of that monstrosity of an hotel at the east end of Princes Street, which ought to win it pardon for its offence of existing at all. On a dark, wet winter's evening, Princes Street lies below, a river of light, reflecting a thousand flashing gleams from passing vehicles and brilliant shop windows. Down the centre runs the line of street lamps, accentuating the dip in the street, invisible by day, and under the lamps moves the long procession of lights from tramway cars, blue, green, red and yellow, perpetually

changing as one car passes out of sight and another takes its place. To the south is a stretch of blackness, broken only by the lamps of the railway and the Mound, and the brightly-lit buses that climb slowly up the hill. South of that again is the familiar, irregular line of the High Street, with its back windows, from which pale gleams from ancient tenements answer the brilliance of the modern street below them. Far away, for distances are deceptive in the darkness, lights shining, apparently in the sky, show the whereabouts of the Castle, though its outlines are quite invisible on such a night of wind and storm. But this is a digression. Modern life ought not to obtrude itself in a book devoted to the past, and we will come back to daylight again to tell something of the former Princes Street residents.

Beginning at the east end, the first house is No. 10, a rather insignificant-looking building completely dwarfed by the Register House on one side and the North British Hotel in front. Built by John Neale, a silk mercer, in 1769, it had the honour to be, as we saw before, the first house in Princes Street, and has therefore remained free of taxes until the present time, but there were greater things than freedom from rates in store for it. Mr. Neale had a daughter, and that daughter married Archibald Constable, the Czar, the Crafty, the Prince of Publishers, as he was named by his various friends and enemies according to the results of their dealings with him. In 1822 Constable was able to buy No 10. from his wife's relations, and removed thither with his stock from the High Street. A bookseller's shop in those days was something more than a shop. It was a "literary lounge" as well, and at 10 Princes Street, Scott, Lockhart, Jeffrey, Cockburn, Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe, Miss Ferrier, and all those who made the name of Edinburgh famous in the history of literature, were sure to meet and fraternize over the newest additions to Constable's stock, laid out on

a table for their benefit. The lord and master of the shop, Constable himself, has fared rather hardly at the hands of most writers, and yet he was a great man. None of the Edinburgh publishers before him realized that the labourer was worthy of his hire, and that the enormous prices which made them shake their heads in speechless dismay were to produce fruit, some ten, some a thousandfold. As Lord Cockburn said, "Ten, even twenty guineas a sheet for a review, £2000 or £3000 for a single poem, and £1000 each for two philosophical dissertations, drew authors from dens where they would otherwise have starved, and made Edinburgh a literary mart, famous with strangers, and the pride of its own citizens."

But his princely generosity in payments had its drawbacks as well. Many of the authors who came from their dens to No. 10 Princes Street would have been better employed wielding a spade than a pen, and Constable was hard put to it sometimes to refuse some utterly impossible manuscript, especially when it came with a recommendation from Scott, who never could harden his heart to the appeals of needy brethren. "I like Scott's ain bairns," he burst out in a fit of irritation one day, "but Heaven preserve me from those of his fathering."

It was in January, 1826, that the news of Constable's bankruptcy fell like a thunderbolt upon all who heard it. The Czar stood firm till the last moment, hoping to save his firm from being dragged down by the utter inefficiency of Ballantyne. As a last resource he begged Lockhart to come with him to the Bank of England, to try and raise a loan of £100,000 to £200,000, on the security of his copyrights. No mean security it was, as things turned out, for the copyrights included the "Encyclopædia Britannica," half of the "Edinburgh Review," and practically the whole of Scott's works, his poetry as well as the Waverley Novels, and the Life of

Napoleon at which he was still working. But Lockhart refused to interfere without direct instructions from his father-in-law, and Constable, white, and nearly choking with rage, was forced to bow to the inevitable. The blow was too heavy for him. He only survived the loss of his business, his prestige, and his autocracy for a year. It was James Ballantyne, the original cause of the disaster, who outlived all parties, and saw, before his own death in 1833, the full effects of the failure.

No. 17, now Andrew Elliott's bookshop, has long been connected with literature, for it was here that William Blackwood, inspired by the magnificence of John Murray's publishing house in Albemarle Street, set up his sign in 1816, after giving up his business as a second-hand bookseller in the South Bridge, and here, in 1817, appeared the first number of "Maga." About 1830 he removed to No. 45 George Street, where the business of the firm is still carried on.

It is worth while recalling, in connection with the present occupants of No. 17, that it was Andrew Elliott, who, in 1866, published a small green-covered pamphlet for Mr. Thomas Stevenson, of lighthouse fame. It was written by Mr. Stevenson's son, a boy not quite sixteen, Robert Louis by name. Only a hundred copies were printed and sold at the modest price of fourpence. As most of them were bought by Mr. and Mrs. Stevenson themselves and given away to friends, the edition was soon exhausted. The fourpenny green-covered pamphlet, the first publication of R. L. S., is worth from fifty to sixty guineas to-day.

No. 21 was built by one Shadrach Moyes, who half regretted his own temerity in embarking on such a foolish adventure, and only put up his house on condition that the site immediately to the west should be built upon simultaneously, to shield him from the perpetual wind, from which he had been so comfortably sheltered before in a nice "clarty" High Street close. No. 27,

or rather, what used to be No. 27, was Henry Erskine's abode after he left George Square.

At No. 31 (we call it 31 for the sake of convenience, though the original house has long since gone) that genial and lovable old toper, Lord Hermand, took up his abode, but his place was obviously in some narrow close of the Old Town, for was he not almost the last of his race, a chip of the eighteenth-century block, which loved its taverns, its flats and its smells, caring nought for the airy spaciousness of a complete house! With Hermand, drinking was a religion—it was not a pastime, not an excuse for riotous merriment. It was one of the most solemn and important avocations of a lifetime, and nothing shocked the old man more than the advent of a race of nineteenth-century weaklings who either rose from the table before the last bottle was emptied, or else remained and finished the evening under it. For Hermand never got drunk. That would have been unworthy of the claret he loved. His kindly soul warmed to his fellow-creatures more than ever; his eloquence rose to such wonderful heights that he used to declare he could have won the Pope himself over to Presbyterianism if only he could have got his Holiness to sup with him.

But his warm-heartedness was all his own, not a temporary effect produced by claret. There is the often-told story of how Hermand once had to try a diminutive English midshipman, who had killed a much bigger lad in a fight that the latter had forced upon him. The judge attempted to save the culprit by refusing to try a child. That refuge was not allowed, however; the trial had to proceed, and the indictment, describing how the accused had "wickedly and feloniously" murdered the deceased, was read. Hermand, regardless of the strict impartiality of a judge, looked benevolently at the prisoner and said, "Well, my young friend, this is not true, is it? Are you guilty or not guilty?"

"Not guilty, my lord," was the reply. "I'll be sworn you're not," Hermand burst out triumphantly, and flung himself heart and soul into the task of saving the boy. "Culpable homicide" was the verdict, and though the judge would have been better pleased with a "Not guilty," he was able to let his prisoner off with a few days' imprisonment.

Years of hard drinking made no difference to Lord Hermand. He ate well, slept well and worked well in spite of it. When over eighty he was still as active as ever, and it was only just before his death, in 1827, that his strength began to fail him. Even then his was a kindly fate well suited to his disposition, for he slipped peacefully out of life without illness or suffering, never having known what it was to have so much as a headache in the course of his eighty-four years.

John Clerk of Eldin, father of the famous lame-legged lawyer of the same name, lived at an earlier No. 37. Famous in his day as a man of both scientific and artistic attainments, and the propounder of a system of naval tactics, he used to declare, with a pride not unmixed with wistfulness as well as humour, "I remember the time when people, seeing John limping on the street, used to ask 'What lame lad that was?' and the answer would be, 'That's the son of Clerk of Eldin.' But now, when I myself am passing, I hear them saying, 'What auld grey-headed man is that?' And the answer is, 'That's the father o' John Clerk.'"

No. 40, the squat flat-roofed house, occupied, on the first floor, by the Sun Insurance Office, is among the few of the original Princes Street houses remaining still. Tradition, as handed down by Chambers, has it that when Mr. Wight, a well-known lawyer, built himself a house in St. Andrew Square, he also bought the site immediately south of it, and had this low flat-topped building erected. And why? Well, if some one else

was to buy the feu, and build a four-story house thereon, it would hide the clock on St. Giles's tower (the clock had a face then) from Mr. Wight's windows. Mr. Wight had lived within sight and sound of St. Giles's clock, and regulated his day's work by it, all his life, and it was inconceivable that he should ever get to the Courts betimes in the morning without it. Hence No. 40 Princes Street—at least so says tradition, and why not leave tradition undisturbed ?

The New Club, nearly opposite the Mound, occupies the site of two houses, Nos. 84 and 85, the former being the Tax Office over which old Henry Mackenzie presided, sighing, perhaps, for the days of his youth, when he had shot partridges and hares on that very spot, and the latter the house of James Donaldson, the wealthy founder of Donaldson's Hospital.

No. 100 was the residence of Lady Mary Clerk of Penicuik, who loved dearly her unofficial title of " The White Rose of Scotland." Thereby hangs a tale. She was a Miss Dacre, born in Cumberland in the memorable autumn of 1745, when Prince Charlie and his men marched to Carlisle. There was great trepidation among all the Border families when they heard that the " Highland robbers " were approaching, and blood-curdling tales of barbarous ferocity were passed from household to household. A few days after the child's birth the Dacres thought their worst fears were about to be realized when a band of Highlanders came trooping up to the house. They were Macdonalds come to levy contributions for the army. However, when their chieftain heard what the domestic circumstances of the house were, he gave orders that Mrs. Dacre was on no account to be disturbed, and that the proposed levy was not to be exacted. Not only that, but before leaving he took the cockade, the " white rose," from his bonnet and stuck it on the baby's cap, telling the terrified nurse that so long as the child wore that, no Highlander would

lift a finger against any of the household. No wonder the future Lady Mary Clerk was a Jacobite, though, curiously enough, she gave her most valued possession, Prince Charlie's knife, fork and spoon in a case for travelling, to George IV, when he visited Edinburgh in 1822.

While talking of Scott we may note that one of his early friends, John Irving, W.S., lived at No. 106 Princes Street. When the former was a somewhat unwilling apprentice to the law, he and Irving used to spend every half-holiday together, wandering about the countryside, over Arthur's Seat, the vanished Figgate Whins, or away to Hawthornden or Roslin, making up wonderful tales of romantic chivalry and wild, impossible adventures as they went, tales which both boys were afraid might by some chance be overheard or come to the ears of their elders.

Two doors farther west, No. 108, was Lord Woodhouselee's town house, where his widow Mrs. Fraser-Tytler (in those days judges' wives did not share in their husbands' titles) lived for many years after his death. The first-floor room, now part of Mackie's tea-rooms, was Lord Woodhouselee's drawing-room, where all the best brains that Edinburgh could produce, at a time when the best was a very real superlative, have gathered for many a dinner or supper party. Scott was a frequent visitor, and here old Henry Mackenzie and Dugald Stewart and Playfair, of the eighteenth century, must often have seen the judge's son, young Patrick Fraser-Tytler, who was destined to make a name greater than his father's, as the writer of the celebrated "History of Scotland."

At No. 126 lived James Skene of Rubislaw, the much-loved friend of Scott's later, sadder years. He is the "good Samaritan James Skene, the only one among my numerous friends who can properly be termed amicus curarum mearum, others being too busy or too gay,

and several being estranged by habit." During the last years he was constantly at hand for a walk, or a chat, and it was to him that Sir Walter confided the troubles, irritations and weariness of the burden he had taken on his shoulders. "Walked with difficulty as far as Skene's," is one of the entries in his Journal, "and there sat and got out of my fidgety feeling." Skene outlived his friend by more than thirty years. As an old man of nearly ninety, he still kept green the memory of that friendship. One day, when very near his end, his daughter, coming into his room, found the old man in a state of perfect delight. "I have had such a great pleasure," he said. "Scott has been here—he came from a long distance to see me—he has been sitting with me at the fireside talking over our happy recollections of the past."

Skene has another claim upon the memory of Edinburgh. It was he who designed Princes Street Gardens. The Nor' Loch, where witches had been ducked in old days, was drained when the bridge was built, but the draining, though it had done away with the loch, had left the most horrible, dirty and smelly swamp imaginable. Drowned cats and dogs were thrown there, the sewerage of the town gradually found its way there, and the result was rather too much even for the insensitive noses of the dwellers in the Old Town. In fact the valley was so utterly deserted that the troops at the Castle used to practise ball-firing there, setting up their targets under the Castle, and shooting from the opposite side of the morass. Thanks to Skene's energy the draining was properly carried out at last, and gardens were designed for the benefit of the Princes Street residents. The steep bank on the south side was planted with trees, and walks were made leading down from the Esplanade to the bottom of the valley. Scott was given a key to the gardens, and many a time he blessed the donors when, "tender-hoofed" as he was, he

escaped the cobblestones and limped slowly down alongside the rock he loved.

At No. 139 lived Lord Braxfield's widow, that same Miss Orde* whose brief and business-like wooing is part of the story of Queen Street, and here the chronicle of long-past days in Princes Street comes to an end, and we turn instead to George Street and the two squares, where there is yet another chapter of memories to be gleaned.

* See page 192.

CHAPTER XIII

GEORGE STREET AND THE SQUARES

A CENTURY and a half ago there was a little cottage on the site of what is now the Royal Bank, the big building standing back from the street on the east side of St. Andrew Square. It was called "Peace and Plenty," from the sign that hung over the door, and thither, on a summer's evening, the good folk of Edinburgh were wont to walk and partake of a plate of strawberries and cream, or whatever fruit happened to be in season, in its sanded parlour. The first houses were being built already on that side of the North Bridge, and no doubt many a head-shaking over the follies of their brethren did the wiseacres indulge in at "Peace and Plenty." What was the use of a man thinking he would live on that side of the valley, right away from his place of business? As to the North Bridge, it had fallen once already, and what was more likely than that it would fall again, and then where would this New Town of theirs be? In suchwise, mutually congratulating themselves on their wisdom in refusing to listen to such ridiculous notions, they would pay their reckoning and walk on through the fields to Woods Farm, which stood between the present Queen Street and Heriot Row, coming home again to their own snug quarters in the High Street or Lawnmarket by way of the hawthorn-bordered Kirk Loan and the West Port.

A few more years and "Peace and Plenty," with its strawberries, was a thing of the past. Houses of a

magnificence such as had never been known were growing up in what was called St. Andrew Square, and rumour declared that they cost as much as £3000, or even £4000, apiece.

The corner house on the south-west side, No. 8, with its entrance in St. David Street, belonged to David Hume. The stout and genial philosopher was one of the earliest residents, for the house was built in 1770, and, according to a time-honoured legend, St. David Street was ironically named after him. Until his death, in 1775, it was the scene of many a pleasant gathering, when his old friends Adam Smith, Professor Ferguson, Alexander Carlyle, and others, came to dine with him here as they had been wont to do in their earlier, less prosperous days at some cheap tavern in the High Street. There is another time-honoured tradition attached to Hume's house, to the effect that after his death the first meetings of the Bible Society of Scotland were held in it. It may be so, and would only be another of the many examples of the irony of historical fate if it were.

North St. David Street, leading out of St. Andrew Square on the opposite side, has a tragic association with Scott, for No. 6 was the lodging-house, third-rate and uncomfortable, in which he spent two months after his bankruptcy. It was on May 12, 1826, that he came here, having left Lady Scott dying at Abbotsford, overburdened with the colossal weight of debt he had taken upon his shoulders, and completely weary, both in mind and body. Some of the bitterest moments of his life must have been spent in these rooms, and the Journal for those two months is sad reading, all the sadder for the occasional flashes of the old buoyancy with which he endeavoured to struggle against the misery of it all.

Returning to the square again, No. 21, at the corner of North St. David Street, is celebrated as the birthplace

of Lord Brougham. His father, the owner of Brougham Hall, in the North of England, came to Scotland as a young man, broken-hearted at the death of Miss Whelpdale to whom he had been engaged. It was about 1776 that he arrived in Edinburgh, in the course of the travels which his doctor advised him to take as a means of gaining a new interest in life, and, according to the custom enforced by the discomfort of Edinburgh inns, he went in search of lodgings. Mrs. Syme, a widowed sister of Principal Robertson, who had a house at the Cowgate-head, had rooms to let, and there he took up his abode for a while. Now, Mrs. Syme had a very attractive daughter, and Brougham, much to his own surprise, found that the "new interest in life" was not so difficult to obtain as he expected. He lingered on week after week, and the upshot of his stay was that Miss Eleanor Syme became Mrs. Brougham. By this time he was so delighted with Edinburgh that he decided to settle there for good, and with this end in view he took one of the new houses in St. Andrew Square, and there his son, Henry Brougham, was born on September 19, 1778.

A later owner of this same house was the eccentric Earl of Buchan, elder brother of Henry Erskine. By no means devoid of brains and talent, he was one of the hardest workers in Edinburgh. Up early in the morning, to bed late at night, living with Spartan simplicity, and never idle for one moment, his lordship managed to achieve—nothing. Only one of his doughty deeds recurs to one at the moment. A certain number of the "Edinburgh Review" caused deep offence by its political articles, and no one felt himself more insulted than Lord Buchan. Telling his footman to open the front door and place the obnoxious magazine on the step, he advanced and, with one mighty kick, sent it flying into the middle of the street. His honour was satisfied!

The most vain of all vain men, he had conceived a

great, though rather condescending, admiration for Sir Walter Scott, and it was with feelings of very real sorrow that he heard of the latter's serious illness in 1819. Convinced that his friend was about to die, Lord Buchan went straight off to Castle Street, pushed past the servants, and had just reached Sir Walter's door when he was repulsed, and gently assisted downstairs again. He went away so angry that James Ballantyne was sent hastily off to St. Andrew Square to smooth matters down, and found the old peer in a state of insulted dignity. "I wished," said he, "to embrace Walter Scott before he died, and to inform him that I had long considered it a satisfactory circumstance that he and I were destined to rest together in the same place of sepulture. The principal thing, however, was to relieve his mind as to the arrangements for his funeral—to show him a plan which I had prepared for the procession —and, in a word, to assure him that I took upon myself the conduct of the whole ceremonial at Dryburgh." Whereupon he produced a paper upon which all the details of the burial were set forth, but in which the central figure was to be, not Walter Scott, deceased, but David, Earl of Buchan, very much alive!

Fate had decreed things otherwise, however, for it was Sir Walter who was among the mourners when the eccentric old Earl went to his last resting-place at Dryburgh Abbey some years later.

No. 35, on the west side, was the house built by Mr. Andrew Crosbie, the advocate, who, as we saw before, was the original of Counsellor Pleydell in "Guy Mannering." It was this house, combined with the failure of the Douglas and Heron Bank, that ruined him, and though he clung to it as the last relic of a very fair fortune, he was not able even to furnish the whole of it, and spent his last years of senile decay wandering unhappily about the bare rooms of the house that had been his pride a little while before.

In later years this house, and No. 34 next door to it, were turned into Douglas's Hotel, and it was here that Scott was brought for one night, on his way home to Abbotsford, for the last time.

Lockhart tells the well-known story of how the dying man, yearning for his beloved Abbotsford, was carried to a packet-boat and brought, almost unconscious, from London to Newhaven, how he was taken from there to the hotel in St. Andrew Square, and how, early on the following morning, July 11, 1832, the little party set off for Abbotsford, where the sight of the Eildons and the Tweed roused Scott from his stupor for a while, though his overworked mind was worn out at last, and he died a few weeks later.

The Royal Bank, one of the finest modern buildings in Edinburgh, which stands in its own grounds next to Andrew Crosbie's house, has undergone a good many vicissitudes. When the square was originally planned out, the site was reserved for St. Andrew's Church, which, exactly opposite to St. George's in Charlotte Square at the other end of George Street, was to be the crowning touch put to a great design. Unluckily for the design, Sir Laurence Dundas had decided to build a house in St. Andrew Square, and had set his heart on one particular site, that of the new church. The story goes that he carried his point by promising to give different parts of the work to certain interested members of the Town Council, the building to one, the decoration to another, and so on. At any rate, he got his way, and the new church was given its present site in George Street by way of a compromise. Being a careful man, Sir Laurence had the forethought to buy two more feus in York Place at the same time, so as to ensure an uninterrupted view from his windows of the country beyond, with Leith and the Forth to complete the picture, for at that time it was thought that York Place, like Queen Street, would be left open on the

north side ; as to any idea of the town spreading until it actually joined with Leith—no one dreamed of anything so absurd.

The house arose in due course, and its owner was delighted with it. He had known reverses of fortune, for in his youth he had begun his career serving behind the counter, owing to his father's financial losses. However, those were warlike days, and the impecunious young Dundas soon had an opportunity of leaving the shop for the army, and after a good many years of service he was able to retire, a very well-to-do man. He was created a baronet in 1762, and settled in Edinburgh once more. One of his distinguishing characteristics was a great love of gambling, and it is said that this nearly led to the loss of his new house. He sat down to play one night with General Scott, another great gambler, Canning's father-in-law. The baronet had a run of bad luck which exhausted his ready cash before he had had a full evening's play, whereupon the General offered to stake a large sum of money against the house in St. Andrew Square. The offer was accepted, and Sir Laurence lost again. House, grounds and everything became the property of his successful opponent. It was arranged, however, that the baronet should keep his house on condition that he built another of equal value on whatever site the General should choose. The result of this compromise was the building of the mansion of Bellevue, which General Scott occupied for many years before it was swept away in the various improvements of the town.

After Sir Laurence's death his house became the Excise Office, and the two feus in York Place were sold for building land. Then, in 1820, the Royal Bank, which had outgrown its confined quarters in the Old Bank Close, bought the house, and remains in possession to this day.

Turning into George Street, the first building to claim

attention is St. Andrew's Church, famous as the scene of the Disruption of 1843, the dramatic termination of the movement, so largely promoted by Dr. Chalmers, to put an end to patronage, and the rights of the Civil Courts over the Church. The Annual Assembly, under the Lord High Commissioner, met in St. Andrew's Church, and a crowd gathered outside in George Street to await the result of the inevitable schism which would follow the movement about to be made against civil interference. What they saw was the Moderator, followed by Dr. Chalmers and no fewer than four hundred and seven ministers, who proceeded down Hanover Street to Tanfield Hall at Canonmills, where they formed their own Free Church, and gave up the livings they held under the system they found so obnoxious, in spite of the fact that they gave up their stipends and faced a problematical future in so doing.

No. 25, on the same side of the street, was the house of Mr. James Ferrier, Principal Clerk of Session, remembered now as the father of Susan Ferrier, the novelist. Miss Ferrier's personality is elusive. There is curiously little about her in the memoirs of the time. We know that she went to Abbotsford, and that Scott noted down in his diary that she was "a gifted personage . . . simple, full of humour, and exceedingly ready at repartee, and all this without the least affectation of the bluestocking." We know that her father was agent for the Argyle estates, and that she, as a girl, often went to Roseneath and Inverary in the days of the fifth Duke of Argyle and his Duchess, the beautiful Elizabeth Gunning. We know that she was plain, that she wrote three novels and many letters (in which last a rather wearisome forced wit is predominant); that she was decidedly "difficile" in her later years, and lived very much retired from the world from the time of her father's death in 1829, till her own in 1854. Her books are equally elusive. So overladen with moralizing that

whole pages at a time are like wading in glue, the reward of passages worthy of Jane Austen (though the comparison has been made so often that it is a mere platitude) is suddenly given every now and then to the patient reader, and equally suddenly snatched away. The minor characters live and the principals are mere dummies. Few, if any, are really attractive, but, for all that, the books have a certain indefinable charm, quite as elusive as the personality of their writer.

Old Mr. Ferrier figures as " Uncle Adam " in " Inheritance," and the three aunts, the Misses Jacky, Grizzy and Nicky of " Marriage," were their opposite neighbours, the Misses Edmondstone, who used to come across the street from No. 26 most evenings, for desperate battles over whist with old James Ferrier. Though rather crudely drawn they still have power to charm by their utter inconsequence, and one only wishes the details had been worked in with a rather lighter hand to make them perfect masterpieces.

Still following a literary course, we come to Blackwood's offices at No. 45, where they have been situated ever since their move from Princes Street about 1830. To go into details is unnecessary here, since " Blackwood " became a household word simultaneously with the publication of the famous magazine, and a list of contributors would include all that was greatest in Scottish literary annals, as well as a long series of celebrities from the south of the Tweed, headed, perhaps, by George Eliot.

Nearly opposite Blackwood's are the Assembly Rooms to which, from his furnished rooms in Walker Street, Scott went on February 23, 1827, to preside at the Theatrical Fund Dinner, at which he was publicly acclaimed the author of the " Waverley Novels." In his diary he merely notes, " Meadowbank taxed me with the novels, and to end that farce at once I pleaded guilty, so that splore is ended." It must have been

rather an anti-climax, coming as it did, long after everyone knew the truth, for of course the secret came out as soon as the facts of Ballantyne's ruin were known.

Another famous dinner was given here in honour of Charles Dickens on June 25, 1841. It was almost his first experience of fame. All Edinburgh wished to be introduced to the author of "Pickwick," "Oliver Twist," "Nicholas Nickleby," and "The Old Curiosity Shop." The Royal Hotel, in Princes Street, where he stayed, was fairly besieged with people, and as to the dinner, the room was crammed and many applicants for tickets were sent away. Dickens declared it was utterly impossible for him to attempt a description of the scene, for "it beat all natur'."

He was in Edinburgh on several other occasions, and gave readings in the Music Hall which was added to the back of the Assembly Rooms in 1843. His last appearance was in 1861, when by some mistake far too many tickets were issued, and Dickens found a seething mass of humanity awaiting him, overflowing on to the platform, the windows and any corner that offered an inch or two of standing room, regardless of torn clothes, battered hats, and the remonstrances of panting, helpless attendants. Finally, having persuaded the invaders of the platform to lie down, so as to give him a chance of making himself heard, he delivered his reading and found that, from beginning to end, his enthusiastic, thoroughly uncomfortable and dishevelled audience never missed a single point.

In 1856 Thackeray lectured in the Music Hall, and was fairly hissed down for certain disparaging remarks which he indiscreetly made on the subject of Mary Queen of Scots. He was not best pleased with the terms, either, which were much more satisfactory to the lessees of the Hall than to himself. Altogether, his recollections of lecturing in Edinburgh were less happy than those which Dickens took away with him, though

it was probably well for the latter that his audience knew nothing of a certain heretical remark he made in a letter to John Forster, that the Scott monument was not a thing of beauty, for it was "like the spire of a Gothic church taken off and stuck in the ground."

No. 45 housed Sydney Smith for a time in 1802 and 1803, when he was editing the first number of the "Edinburgh Review." In all he must have spent some six years in Edinburgh, for he first arrived there in 1797 in charge of a pupil, who, prevented by the war from taking the usual "grand tour" of Europe, was sent to Scotland instead. The good-natured, ease-loving Sydney made many friends in Edinburgh, even though he did call Scotland "the garret of the earth," and it was with very real regret that he left the city of "odious smells, barbarous sounds, bad suppers, excellent hearts and most enlightened and cultivated understandings."

On the same side of the street, at No. 60, Shelley lodged for some weeks in 1811. It happened in this way. He had fallen in love with Harriet Westbrook, and though imbued with Godwin's teaching on "the iniquity of marriage," he was soon persuaded by his friend Jefferson Hogg that it was better to conform to the usual custom in that respect. A difficulty arose, owing to both parties being under age, therefore they decided to make for Scotland, where rules and regulations were less strictly observed in those days. Their first task on arrival was to look for a sufficiently accommodating clergyman, and with this in view they visited the Reverend Joseph Robertson of Leith Wynd Chapel, at his house in Big Jack's Land in the Canongate, who, they were told, would serve their purpose admirably, without raising any difficulties as to banns or length of residence. They found him most compliant, and the ceremony was performed on August 28, 1811, after which the married pair went to enjoy a honeymoon at No. 60 George Street (ground and first floor) with Hogg,

who came post-haste from England in occupation of the suite above them.

For some five weeks they stayed in Edinburgh, Shelley rapturous over the beauties of the country round, which was still innocent of smoke and suburbs, Jefferson Hogg rather vexed that his friend preferred the society of his wife to extended walking tours with him, and all three much amused at the strictness of the Presbyterian Sabbath, which frowned upon the trio for laughing in the street, and at the stern admonition Shelley received for proposing a walk one Sunday morning. On October 1 they travelled south by post-chaise, but their connection with Edinburgh was not yet finished, for two years later they were back again, wishing to avoid some very pressing attentions on the part of Shelley's creditors, and took rooms at 36 Frederick Street (the house has now been altered out of all recognition) and seized the opportunity, according to W. M. Rossetti, of getting married once again in the Episcopal Church, being uncertain, evidently, of the validity of Mr. Robertson's ceremony. This time they spent two months in Edinburgh, for Shelley was delighted with the keen northern air (for a time), and all apparently was *couleur de rose* so far as he and Harriet were concerned. It was early in December that they took the road south once again, and it must have been very soon afterwards that the troubles arose which terminated in the tragedy of his desertion and her suicide.

On the north side of the street, at No. 75, lived Mrs. Scott, Sir Walter's mother, during her widowhood. She was the daughter of a Professor Rutherford, well known in his day, and is described in a particularly colourless passage of Lockhart's as being "possessed of superior natural talents, with a good taste for music and poetry and great conversational powers." It was evidently from her that Scott inherited his love of rich mediæval colouring, of chivalry and romance, not from

CHARLOTTE SQUARE: SHOWING "ADAMS" DECORATION

the sternly upright old W. S., his father. Yet we never see her clearly. She was proud of the silver taper-stand which young Walter bought her with his first big fee, and she treasured up some verses he had written as a small boy, but the really human side of her nature only comes to the front in stories like that of the cup of tea she gave to Murray of Broughton. She died in 1819, having lived to see her son at the height of his fame, but not long enough to witness the troubles of later years.

We meet with Jeffrey again at No. 92, for this was his town house from 1810 until his move to Moray Place in 1827, and at 108, a few doors lower down, we are greeted by memories of Scott once again, for it was in rooms here that he and his wife took up their abode for a few weeks at the end of 1797, while the Castle Street * house was being got ready for them.

Passing Sir John Watson Gordon's house, No. 123, one enters Charlotte Square, justly celebrated for the quiet beauty and dignity of its "Adam's" houses. Lack of funds prevented his design being carried out in its entirety, but the north and south sides of the square are beautiful. Curiously enough, they seem to have been but little appreciated in earlier days. "Elegant" and "handsome" are adjectives bestowed by Victorian guide-books upon Adam's work, while the statue of the Prince Consort in the middle of the gardens is "magnificent," and minutely described in every particular, from its price down to the "emblematic bas-reliefs" which surround the pedestal!

Many familiar names are connected with these Charlotte Square houses. No. 7 belonged to Lord Neaves, celebrated as the wittiest and most genial judge of his day. Dr. James Syme, the great surgeon of the middle of last century, spent several years at No. 9. Sir William Fettes, who, as we saw in Chapter V, began life

* See page 197.

as a grocer in the High Street, ended it at No. 13 Charlotte Square, a rich man, Director of the British Linen Bank, who had been Lord Provost of the city, was a Baronet, and was to be the founder of Fettes College.

Lord Cockburn, to whom every lover of an earlier Edinburgh owes so much, bought No. 14 for his town house. It was during the earlier years of his residence that he stood many a summer evening at what is now the head of Glenfinlas Street, and "listened to the ceaseless rural corncrakes nestling happily on the dewy grass," a small detail that gives a very good idea of the spread of the town in the past hundred years.

No. 31 belonged to the Right Hon. William Adam, Lord Chief Commissioner of the Jury Court, and a warm friend of Scott's in his later years. Constantly, in the Journal, one comes across the entries "dined with the Chief Commissioner," or "had a visit from the Chief Commissioner." He was not one of Scott's early friends —in fact they hardly knew each other until 1815, but "I have since lived much with him," to quote the Journal again, "and taken kindly to him as one of the most pleasant, kind-hearted, benevolent and pleasing men I have ever known." In politics Adam was a Whig, and Scott, it need hardly be said, was a Tory, but that was never allowed to stand in the way of their friendship. "The Tories and Whigs may go and be d——d together," wrote Scott, as he summed up his affection for the Lord Chief Commissioner, "as names that have disturbed old Scotland, and torn asunder the most kindly feelings since the first day they were invented." And with that we must take leave of Charlotte Square and seek some more ghosts of the past in Queen Street.

CHAPTER XIV

FROM QUEEN STREET TO LEITH WALK

QUEEN Street shares with George Square the distinction of being one of the few places in Edinburgh to which the ghosts of past residents could return in comparative comfort. It is true that they might be somewhat disconcerted by the extraordinary eruption of brass plates on their formerly unblemished doors, marking the decline from private house to office, but their minds would be set at ease again by the sight of the beautiful and familiar Adams fanlights, the same neat area railings of wreath and urn design, and the same attic windows crowning the good unpretentious houses they had left, shall we say, a century ago. In fact, the earthly visitor of to-day has little difficulty in conjuring up the pleasant, leisurely lives led within these walls when they were still ungrimed with long decades of smoke.

Entering Queen Street at its western end, from Charlotte Square, we come to No. 79, just at the corner, where Sydney Smith lodged in 1800. The view from the windows in those days was magnificent. Albyn Place was yet to be, Heriot Row was unfinished, and beyond that was the steep slope of rough pasture, where gorse flowered as it does on the Braids to-day, terminating at the Water of Leith, which served a dozen picturesque old mills and maltings as it wound its way through the valley towards Leith Shore. On the left the Kirk Loan led straight down to the old

Stock Bridge and a ford just behind the present Malta Terrace, where it was joined by Gabriel's Road, another country lane, which crossed the hillside with many a turn and twist from what is now the east end of Princes Street. The Kirk Loan, modernized into Church Lane, still survives, though its extreme steepness is all that remains as a reminiscence of the hawthorn-bordered track by which country-dwellers made their way to the West Kirk (St. Cuthbert's) on a Sunday morning. Beyond the Water of Leith came Mr. Rocheid's property of Inverleith, and beyond that again, Sydney Smith would have seen various hamlets and country houses dotted about among the fields, right down to the shores of the Forth, and finally, when the wind was from the north and the air was clear, the Fife coast and the Lomonds rising up in the distance. No wonder Edinburgh was proud of her New Town, of which Queen Street, according to Craig's plan, was to be the termination.

A little farther to the east is No. 64, a fine specimen of a New Town house, which was for many years the town residence of the Earls of Wemyss. When buying the site, the Lord Wemyss of the day also took in a good-sized piece of ground on the opposite side of the street, which he turned into a private garden, bounded on the north and east by high walls, much to the annoyance of the occupants of the newly-built houses at the west end of Heriot Row, who were faced with this blank wall for years, until at last it was pulled down, and turned, with the rest of the space between the two streets, into Queen Street Gardens.

Next but one to Lord Wemyss was a house, No. 62, neither comfortable nor expensive, where Jeffrey lodged for eight years, from 1802–1810. He moved here from Buccleuch Place with his first wife, Catherine Wilson, an income, as an advocate, of about £100 per annum, and boundless hopes of a wonderful future in

company with the new "Edinburgh Review." Sydney Smith's suggested motto for the first number, "We cultivate literature on a little oatmeal," was remarkably near the truth in Jeffrey's case. Craigcrook and Moray Place were very far away in 1802, but anyone who had caught more than a glimpse of the diminutive shabby figure hurrying up the hill to the editorial office in George Street, and noted the stiff black hair which fairly bristled with energy, the determination of the mouth, and the vivid penetration of the eyes, would have seen that here, if ever, was a man destined to force his way ruthlessly through whatever obstacles the Fates chose to put in his way.

At No. 53 lived Mrs. Wilson, the mother of "Christopher North," another of those splendid old dames peculiar to Edinburgh, upholders of Church and State to the bitter end, perfect housekeepers, and capable of ruling family and servants with the unquestioned sway of a benevolent autocrat. Here for many years were housed two married sons and their wives, including "Christopher" and his family, numerous unmarried daughters, innumerable grandchildren, and a considerable retinue of servants. The fact that domestic life remained harmonious is a strong point conceded in favour of autocracy!

Next to Mrs. Wilson's house was Sir James Young Simpson's, now adorned with a tablet recording the fact that that celebrated discoverer of chloroform lived there from 1845 till his death in 1870. It was in the dining-room of this house that an unexpected visitor, arriving one evening at the end of November, 1847, might have seen the much-admired and respected doctor sprawling over the table among the débris of a meal, apparently dead drunk, with his two assistants lying on the floor in the same condition, while Mrs. Simpson, in a state of much alarm, went from one to another endeavouring to rouse them to their senses.

The unexpected visitor might well have thought that he had stumbled upon some deadly secret of his friend's private life, but he would hardly have guessed that the secret of one of the greatest discoveries of the age was revealed to his astonished eyes! What had happened was this. Dr. Simpson had long been engaged in the search for an anæsthetic, but with so little success that a bottle of chloroform, his latest achievement, had been laid by for some days untried. Coming home from his work on this particular evening, he came across it while looking for something else, and took it with him when he went to supper. Hardly expecting any greater results than in former experiments he poured a little into glasses for himself and his two assistants to inhale. The effect was startling, for, to quote his own words, all three were "under the mahogany in a trice," to the dismay of Mrs. Simpson and the butler, who put the worst interpretation on the result!

Near the end of the street is No. 8, a large house, built and occupied by Chief Baron Orde of the Scottish Exchequer, in the early days of the New Town. It was here that the very characteristic second wooing of Lord Braxfield took place. The Lord Justice Clerk, desirous of another matrimonial venture, had decided that Miss Elizabeth Orde, the Chief Baron's daughter, was the best-qualified spinster he knew. Accordingly, he crossed the North Bridge one day, came to No. 8 Queen Street, and, finding the lady at home, opened fire without any preliminary skirmishing. "Lizzy, I'm looking for a wife," he began, "and I thought you just the person to suit me. Let me have your answer, off or on, the morn, and nae mair aboot it." Whereupon he walked off again, leaving Miss Orde to decide the matter for herself. She, being nearly as business-like as himself, replied next morning in the affirmative, and married they were without further ado!

Leaving Queen Street we come to York Place, which

was undoubtedly intended to be either a spacious square or else, like Queen Street, a row of houses on the south side only, faced by gardens and a view. However, Craig, the original architect, died before the York Place houses were built. His plan was more or less discarded as the demand for New Town houses became more pressing, and the present solid, though dull, York Place came into being.

St. George's Chapel, the first Episcopal church of northern Edinburgh, is the most prominent building at this end of the street. Grant, generally courteous to modern architecture, dismisses it in the following crushing phrases: "It was designed by Robert Adam, and is of no known style of architecture, and is in every way hideous in conception and in detail. This dingy edifice cost £3000." On the whole there is no need to quarrel with this description, though the fact that Sir Walter Scott always went there when in Edinburgh does throw a certain halo over its unprepossessing exterior.

The greatest character among the York Place residents was no doubt Lord Newton, whose exploits at Daunay Douglas's tavern in Anchor Close were mentioned in Chapter IV. His house was No. 22, and many a time the servants, cleaning the doorsteps of York Place, must have seen a carriage drive up early in the morning and deposit Lord Newton at his own door, rather unsteady on his feet, and apparently fit for nothing but many hours of sleep and oblivion. Those who thought that had failed to gauge the extraordinary capacity for claret and punch with which a Scottish judge of the old school was endowed. Two hours later Lord Newton might reappear, ready for work on the Bench once more. There he would sit, heavy, somnolent, and good-natured, as he appears in Raeburn's portrait, but in spite of closed eyes and ponderous breathing, not a single thing escaped him, as young advocates taking advantage of his appearance found to their cost

when his Lordship came to deliver an opinion. York Place lost as kindly and genial a resident as it ever possessed when Lord Newton's last bottle of claret was drawn and he said an eternal farewell to both Parliament Close and Dawnay Douglas's Tavern in 1811.

No. 32 was built by Sir Henry Raeburn for a studio and exhibition gallery. Through that doorway most of those who were beautiful, celebrated or fashionable have passed to attain a very pleasing immortality at the hands of the master, who receives more attention in the next chapter.

No. 47, on the opposite side of the street, housed another famous artist, Alexander Nasmyth, whose name is chiefly familiar to most of us as the painter of the one known authentic portrait of Burns, now in the Portrait Gallery in Queen Street. A pupil of Allan Ramsay's, he had afterwards studied much abroad, and then returned to a comfortable, prosperous, uneventful life in York Place, where he occupied himself largely with teaching his art to a number of pupils, including his own family.

Picardy Place, though now only a continuation of York Place, preserves the name, but no other vestige, of a quaint old weaving village, built by a party of Huguenot weavers from Picardy, who were invited to leave the persecutions of Catholic France behind them and settle peacefully in Presbyterian Scotland instead. The suggestion did not lack a hint of *quid pro quo*, for in return for five acres of land on which to build their village, the men were to teach weaving, and the women the spinning of cambric yarn to their Scotch protectors, which they did very successfully. It is long since the sound of the shuttle was heard in these regions, and for more than a century past nothing but the name has survived to tell the story of the ten French families who must have found this chilly northern

slope a bleak dwelling-place after the more fertile Picardy they had left.

Just before this street merges on Leith Walk, we come to No. 16, a very ordinary and uninteresting doorway, squeezed almost out of sight between two houses, with fronts that have advanced across what was once the area and steps to the edge of the pavement. This was the house of the lame John Clerk of Eldin, celebrated first as an advocate, then as a judge, but always as a collector, an artist, and as an eccentric.

His bushy eyebrows, rough dishevelled hair, and strongly-marked features, made Lord Cockburn liken him to a Scotch terrier, and the comparison was apt in other ways as well. Honest and warm-hearted to a degree, his fiery temper, when roused in defence of a client's cause, and his defiance of all adversaries, not to mention a considerable jealousy of legal rivals, all bore out his resemblance to a faithful dog firmly confident both in his master and himself. He was never content to give a client his mental powers only. To quote Lord Cockburn, "his temper, his perspiration, his nights, his reason, his whole body and soul, and very often his fee to boot," were given to the cause.

His consulting-room was at the back of the house, and there the greater part of his time was spent. Turning once more to Cockburn's "Memorials," we see the man and his surroundings before us. "Walls covered with books and pictures, of both of which he had a large collection; the floor encumbered by little ill-placed tables, each with a piece of old china on it; strange boxes, bits of sculpture, curious screens and chairs, cats and dogs" (he was devoted to cats, and usually had one perched on his shoulder while he worked) . . . and all manner of trash, dead and living, and all in confusion—John himself sitting in the midst of this museum, in a red worsted nightcap, his crippled limb resting horizontally on a tripod stool, and many

pairs of spectacles and antique snuff-boxes on a small table at his right hand."

Things never seemed to happen with him as they happened with other people. Even after his death, in 1832, the rule still held good. As he left no immediate heirs, all his pictures, china, etc., were sold. The sale took place on March 16, 1833, and the fame of his collection drew a large crowd to the house. The auctioneer was in the drawing-room, in the act of putting up a Teniers, a great favourite of Lord Eldin's, when suddenly, without any warning, the whole floor gave way and some eighty or a hundred people went with it in a mass of dust, china, pictures, and splintered wood, to the room below. One man was killed, many were more or less badly injured, and the havoc worked among John Clerk's collection was immense. Such was the final violent severing of the long connection between the shaggy lawyer and his house in Picardy Place.

CHAPTER XV

TO STOCKBRIDGE AND COMELY BANK

LEAVING George Street by North Castle Street, the first house of interest is No. 39, where Scott spent so many years of his life. It is difficult to know what to say about No. 39. There is much to say indeed, but it has all been said many times before, and in spite of efforts to avoid the more hackneyed aspect of Edinburgh's story, how can one pass over 39 North Castle Street without a word of greeting to an old and valued friend?

His study, so fully described by Lockhart, overlooked the dingy little piece of turf behind the house known as the "back green" in local parlance. The walls were lined with books, leaving space for only one picture, a portrait of Graham of Claverhouse, which hung over the fireplace, flanked with Highland targets, broadswords and dirks. In the middle was a big table, with the velvet-lined desk that Scott always used, covered with law-papers and manuscripts. On the library steps, Hinse, the cat, liked to drowse away the time, and on the hearthrug the famous staghound Maida was always to be found, bearing with dignified patience the advent of children and terriers who made free use of the study. Unlike most writers, Scott never failed to suffer interruptions freely, and many were the visitors who took merciless toll of his time. Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd, complained bitterly of this, regardless of the inroads he made upon it himself,

declaring that upon one occasion at least ten "intruders" were shown in just when he wanted a quiet talk with the Sheriff himself.

The front room on the ground floor was the dining-room, where for many years the "Sunday dinners" drew all who could find any excuse for an invitation. Above the dining-room was the drawing-room, where that most amusing scene took place between Hogg and Mrs. Scott. He was ushered into the room, and found the latter gracefully reclining on a sofa. Unused to paying calls, the shepherd pondered for a moment when he was asked to sit down, then, deciding that he "could never do wrong" if he "copied the lady of the house," he pushed up a second sofa and stretched his bulky form full length upon it. Unluckily Mrs. Scott had not been blessed with a particularly keen sense of humour, and was filled with dismay as she saw her chintzes suffering from the shepherd's boots and hands, which bore considerable traces of the sheep-shearing he had just come from, but, at the same time, could see no way of persuading her visitor to move. And so Scott found them when he came in a little while later. The humour of the situation was not lost upon *him*, at any rate.

It was on that same occasion that Hogg stayed to dinner, and, warmed by the hospitality of the Castle Street house, passed rapidly from the formal "Mr. Scott" to "Shirra," "Scott," "Walter," and then "Wattie." The climax came, however, when to the intense joy of the whole party he followed his host's example, and called Mrs. Scott "Charlotte"!

One could go on for many a page telling stories of the happenings within the walls of No. 39, but having given one time-worn tale already we must pass on from the days of its prosperity and happiness to a sadder time. Captain Basil Hall came to see Sir Walter in the summer of 1826. When he reached the door he

found the familiar plate all covered with rust, "the windows shuttered up, dirty and comfortless," with a "To sell" board fixed to one of them. "The steps were unwashed, and not a single trace remained of the hospitable life of former days." Lady Scott had died less than a month before, and Sir Walter was living in Mrs. Brown's noisy, bug-ridden rooms in St. David Street. The mighty had fallen indeed.

Continuing our way down the hill, we cross Queen Street, go down first Wemyss Place and then the narrow, steep, Church Lane, once the hawthorn-bordered country lane that led through the fields to the old West Kirk of St. Cuthbert's. Beyond the garages which have replaced the hawthorn bushes, Gloucester Place opens out upon the right. An inscription on the walls of No. 6 marks it as the home of John Wilson, "Christopher North," from 1825 until his death in 1854. The man seems to have been very like his own "Noctes Ambrosianæ"; strong with the strength of a giant, possessed of a full-blooded sense of humour, he could smoke the strongest cigars in any quantity, or drink the most potent whisky punch without turning a hair. When he was working for Blackwood he seldom bothered to write a line until a couple of days before the article was required, but when he once began, he put his full strength, mental and physical, into his work. For sixteen hours at a stretch, perhaps, he would be shut up in his study, then, when the finished article was on his desk, he would seize his fishing rod and go striding off for days of wandering along the Tweed or up the Highland glens. Many were the tales of his Homeric feats—how he could walk fifty miles in a day with ease, or how, on going to a Highland farm in quest of refreshment once and being offered a jug of milk and a bottle of whisky, he emptied both into a bowl and quaffed the mixture in one tremendous draught. He was a big man, fair-haired, blue-eyed, with Viking

blood in his veins, such a man as George Borrow would have loved to immortalize. As to the "Noctes Ambrosianæ," of which the scene, by the way, was laid in Ambrose's Tavern, West Register Street (now pulled down), they seem to have lost some of their savour in the course of a century's wear, and most of us are content to take their good qualities on trust.

At this point Church Lane, steeper than ever, becomes Church Street. On the east side stands a row of small shops dating back to the days when Stockbridge was still a village, and over the door of the one marked No. 8 is a board recording the fact that this was the birthplace of David Roberts, the artist. His father was a shoemaker, and in a small way, probably, at that, so young David could hope for no further education than the curriculum of a "penny schule" provided, which certainly offered no outlet for the boy's passionate love for drawing. In default of any better material he is said to have covered the whitewashed walls of the kitchen with his early works, wrought with the ends of burnt matches which he treasured up for the occasion.

The story goes that when Raeburn was at the height of his fame he discovered a small boy trespassing in his garden. The culprit held out a piece of paper by way of an excuse for his sins, and on it Raeburn was surprised to find a very fair drawing of a Gothic window in his library. He asked the boy his name—David Roberts, son of the shoemaker in Duncan's Land, Kirk Loan. The good-natured portrait-painter, mindful of his own early attempts with a looking-glass, gave him leave to come and draw in the garden as often as he liked, provided the entrance was effected by the gate, instead of over the wall, and took a considerable interest in him, giving him paper, pencils, and a certain amount of teaching as well. Architectural work remained Roberts' chief study through life, and in that particular subject he had few rivals.

At the bottom of the hill is the district of Stockbridge, through which the Water of Leith ripples over its stony bed towards the sea. A footpath leads westwards up the stream to the mineral well of St. Bernard's, where Edinburgh citizens of past generations were wont to repair in summer to take the waters, and on through the valley, clothed on either side with grass and trees, to the Dean Village with its picturesque old mills and cottages, which still contrives to keep a certain rural atmosphere in spite of being nearly swallowed up in the ever-growing city.

The chief interest of Stockbridge itself lies in its connection with Raeburn, for here stood the house and grounds of St. Bernard's, where he spent the greater part of his singularly happy life. His first beginnings were inauspicious. His father, a well-to-do yarn boiler of Stockbridge, died about 1760, and his mother a short while afterwards, leaving the boy of four or five years old to the care of an elder brother, William, then about sixteen. In due course Henry was sent to Heriot's Hospital, and afterwards apprenticed, as we saw, to Mr. Gilliland, the goldsmith in Parliament Close. It was when his talent for drawing was first discovered, whether by David Deuchar, according to the story quoted before, or not, that the Fates began to smile upon him, and from that day until his death in 1823 he went straight from one success to another. Undoubtedly the greatest portrait painter of his country, if not of his age, he was successful financially too. He married a wife he continued to love to the last, and she brought a considerable addition to his income as well as to his happiness. His work was a joy to him, and he remained in harness to the last. His house was delightful, he had friends everywhere, and, in short, must have had as happy a life as ever was granted to any man.

The approach to St. Bernard's was on the north

side of the bridge; the house itself stood on what is now the east side of Carlton Street; Danube Street was an orchard leading down to the river banks; St. Bernard's Crescent was gardens and hothouses, and the grounds stretched away to the end of Ann Street. Another house shared the entrance at Dean Terrace, for a second drive branched off to the right and led to the picturesque old Deanhaugh House, which stood on the site of the present Leslie Place. Thereby hangs a tale. In 1778 the owner and occupant of this house was a pretty widow with two children: the Countess Leslie she was called, for her husband had won a title in foreign service. The time-honoured story is that Raeburn, while sketching in the country one day, came upon a young lady whose appearance charmed him so much that he included her in the sketch, and that, some time afterwards, to his great joy and surprise, this same lady appeared at his studio to arrange for sittings, with the result that she fell in love with the artist who was already in love with her, and they were married soon after the portrait was completed. Unluckily for the story it is hardly likely that he could have lived long at St. Bernard's, which belonged to his elder brother, and was the painter's home as well, without catching a glimpse of the young Countess who lived so near, or that she, in such a small village as Stockbridge, had not realized that the famous Mr. Henry Raeburn was her neighbour, hardly a stone-throw away. However it may have come about, married they were in 1778, and lived for some years in Deanhaugh House, until Raeburn inherited St. Bernard's on his brother's death in 1788.

Besides his painting the artist shared with Leonardo da Vinci a great love of other matters that lay quite outside his profession. At one time he thought of developing an entirely new principle of naval architecture, and spent hours in making models with the delicate

skill of his goldsmith days. Another time he was making vain efforts to discover the secret of perpetual motion. Then he would turn his attention to the heating of greenhouses and the problems of gardening. But, of all the side-tracks down which he wandered, the most successful, from the financial point of view, was building. The planning out of streets had a fascination for him nearly as great as tracing out the interplay of mind and character on the features of his sitters. Much of his land was feud off in his lifetime, including the site of St. Bernard's Crescent, which, it may be remembered, he designed himself. Its situation was too low and sunless to make it a fashionable abode, but so far as design goes, it has few rivals in the New Town of Edinburgh.

Higher up the hill, behind St. Bernard's Crescent, and reached from Dean Terrace, is Ann Street, another of Raeburn's building speculations, which he named after his wife. Here we meet with John Wilson again, for he lived at No. 29 for several years before his final move to Gloucester Place in 1825. He shares the honours of the house with De Quincey, who, coming to "Christopher North" for a short visit, remained there for months. They must have made a curious couple, the strongly-built Wilson, almost overpoweringly healthy, and the nervous, dyspeptic, drug-taking De Quincey. Wilson's daughter, Mrs. Gordon, gives an often-quoted description of the opium-eater's way of life at that time. A strong dose of laudanum put him into blissful unconsciousness for the earlier part of the day. For hours he would lie stretched out on the hearthrug in front of the fire, with his head pillowed on a book. By the afternoon he roused himself sufficiently to take his frugal dinner of a piece of mutton, boiled rice with milk, and coffee, on the subject of which he had a daily conversation with Wilson's cook, who declared, in awestruck admiration of his rhetorical

explanations: "Mr. Quinshy would mak' a gran' preacher, though a hantle o' folk would ne'er ken what he was after." As evening approached, his torpid inactivity wore away, and by midnight he was a genius once more. Knowing his ways, Wilson used to arrange late supper parties to show De Quincey at his best. By three or four in the morning he was worked up to the height of brilliance, and his listeners forgot the time, forgot that they liked to talk themselves, forgot everything, in fact, except the wonderful charm of language, varying from grand poetical cadences to quaint colloquialisms, which he seemed able to pour forth unceasingly. Then, a few hours later, the flame would have sunk low and the listless, drug-sodden De Quincey would take the place of the brilliant conversationist.

Following the Stockbridge tram-lines to their terminus, about half a mile beyond the bridge, we reach Comely Bank. In a row of small, old-fashioned villas on the north side of the road is one of Edinburgh's later historic houses, Carlyle's first home, No. 21. It was in 1826 that Thomas Carlyle and Jane Welsh, that ill-assorted couple, overcame the many obstacles in the way of their marriage, and took up their abode here. He possessed £200 with which to meet current expenses, and the manuscript of a novel which, as no publisher would take it, was afterwards burnt. Mrs. Welsh, trying in many ways, and sincerely disapproving of the match, nevertheless made things possible for them by paying the rent of the house, £32 per annum, and providing the furniture as well. It was a modest enough beginning, but the eighteen months at Comely Bank held a considerable amount of happiness. In those days it was the last extension of Edinburgh, and Mrs. Carlyle could write and say that, except for the fact of being one of a row, it was just like the country, for there was a little garden in front "overshadowed by a fair-spreading tree" and all the windows looked

out on to an expanse of green fields, without a single street in view. In the mornings Carlyle retired to the back room to wrestle with his work till one or two o'clock, when he would go for a walk until dinner-time (4 o'clock). After dinner they both studied languages all the evening, only pausing to make some coffee, until ten o'clock, when they sat down to a bowl of porridge by way of supper.

Although Carlyle had vowed that they would have no visitors, for visitors were only "nauseous intruders," a good many people found their way down to Comely Bank, including De Quincey, John Wilson, who never felt quite at home with his host, however, and Sir David Brewster. Jeffrey was another friend. During the summer he would often ride round by Comely Bank on his way out to Craigcrook, and stop for a talk with the sage, who was sometimes to be found meditating in company with his pipe under the "fair-spreading tree." The talk would often end in the two going off together, Carlyle striding along beside Jeffrey's horse, pouring out his accumulation of ideas as he walked. Sometimes he supped at Craigcrook, staying on, if he was in the mood for talk, until two or three in the morning. And yet, for all that, they were not entirely congenial companions. The older man found his guest "so dreadfully in earnest" upon all occasions, and must often have wished that he showed just a little more of the brilliant wit which had marked Jeffrey's own particular circle in the early days of the "Edinburgh Review." Carlyle, on the other hand, only liked Jeffrey when serious, and if any visitors other than the few he cared for turned up at Craigcrook when he was there, he became surly as a bear at what he considered the ill-timed levity of those whose views of life were of a more radiant colour than his own.

The association with Comely Bank was short, however. In the spring of 1828, after some eighteen

months of married life, the house was given up, and they moved to Craigenputtock. After that it was London, and except for occasional short visits, Edinburgh knew them no more.

CHAPTER XVI

TO CANONMILLS AND INVERLEITH

ANOTHER way northwards from George Street is by Hanover Street, and this too leads us into the midst of many associations. Crossing Queen Street, we go down the hill until we come to Heriot Row, on the left, one of the most attractive streets of the New Town. James Ballantyne spent some years at No. 3, having moved there from St. John Street, about 1823, with a view to ending his days in a more fashionable quarter than the Canongate. He was living here at the time of his final crash, when he brought Constable down with him in the general ruin, after which he moved again, to humbler quarters in Albany Street, where he died in 1833.

No. 6 was Henry Mackenzie's home in his later years. Shrivelled and yellow as if he had been dried in a kiln, the old man had a wonderful vitality in spite of his eighty-six years, and, what caused him considerable satisfaction, a certain resemblance to Voltaire, inclusive of the dressing-gown. "The Man of Feeling" is only a name now. Even before he died his novels were eyed with a certain contempt by the rising generation. As Scott wrote in his diary, on hearing the news of his death in 1831, "He has long maintained a niche in Scottish literature—gayest of the gay, though most sensitive of the sentimental."

For some years, during the 'seventies, there was a brass plate on the door of No. 17 Heriot Row, with

" Mr. Stevenson, Advocate " upon it. R. L. S., having definitely declined to enter his father's famous firm of lighthouse engineers, tried the law instead. No doubt the plate was kept beautifully polished, but few inquiries were made for the advocate. In fact, the sum total of Stevenson's earnings at the Bar was four guineas. No wonder old Thomas Stevenson, his father, was nearly in despair. It was in 1857 that they had moved up the hill from their damp quarters in Inverleith Terrace to Heriot Row, and No. 17 was Louis's home until he finally left for the journey to California, which broke up his health completely, and gave him the one woman who could ever have been happy as his wife. Most of his earlier essays were written at No. 17, but no one can call the Edinburgh period a profitable part of Stevenson's life. Possessed of a love for what would have been the *vie de Bohême* in Paris, but which had a rather more sordid counterpart in Edinburgh, his parents, indulgent and devoted though they were, must often have wondered why they had been blessed with a son so different to the older generation of " the family of engineers." The essays were certainly good, but they seemed a poor exchange for the substantial results of lighthouse building, and few of Thomas Stevenson's friends could see anything in Louis but a " spoilt, conceited young fool " who wore a velvet coat. They were nearly right too, for had he died, as he so nearly did, in California, he would have left little behind him to alter the general opinion. How could they have foreseen that the initials " R. L. S." were to be known from one end of the world to the other, or that collectors would eagerly snatch up every letter or scrap of paper he had ever written ? They could no more foresee that than Louis himself, shivering in the bitter east wind, and loathing Edinburgh with all his heart, could foresee the yearning he would have in later years for its noisy cobble-stones and ungenial atmosphere, a

yearning which the soft tropical beauty of the South Seas could never satisfy.

Returning once more to Hanover Street, which now becomes Dundas Street, we plunge into the midst of what Mrs. Oliphant called "those doleful lines of handsome houses which weigh down the cheerful hillside under tons of monotonous stone." Northumberland Street is the first "doleful line." At No 25, in the eastern section of the street, the John Gibson Lockharts lived for about a year, from the autumn of 1823. Scott's biographer was, like Stevenson, one of Edinburgh's legal failures, though, apart from that, the two men were utterly different. So far as Lockhart's legal career went, he was like the princes of Grimms' and Hans Andersen's tales, who, after receiving all good gifts at their christening, are blasted with some quality which nullifies all the others, by the malignant fairy whose invitation was omitted. In this case it was evidently decided that he should never be able to make a speech. Wit, acumen, legal knowledge, application—all were his, but, strive as he would, he could not speak. His first sentences landed him deep in the mud, and all the others were vain efforts to get back on to firm ground again.

It was in 1819, when he was twenty-five, that this briefless barrister of a literary turn of mind was introduced to Scott. The older man took to the younger, in spite of the sharply satirical vein, so alien to his own nature, which made Lockhart's most intimate friends a little doubtful whether their turn for castigation would not come next. The sequel to the introduction, his marriage to Sophia Scott in 1820, need not be retold. His literary and political writings brought him fame in the course of a few years, and in 1825 he left Edinburgh for London, to become the editor of the "Quarterly Review." Those pungent articles he produced with such deadly effect are but dry reading

and intolerably long after the lapse of a century. "Peter's Letters" are only of interest to those who are seeking out details of the history of Edinburgh of that day, but the "Life of Scott," the ultimate outcome of the meeting in 1819, can never be superseded. One does wish, though, that Lockhart had just a touch more of the qualities that made Boswell the perfect biographer.

At No. 60 Great King Street, Edward Irving spent a few weeks, when he returned to Edinburgh in 1828 to give a series of lectures on the Apocalypse. The days when he set the feet of Jane Welsh upon the path of study, and perhaps fell in love with her at the same time, were long past. Carlyle, who had looked up to him in his earlier years, and owed much to him, had little patience with him when he became the adored preacher of the Regent Square Chapel. He was a curious mixture of qualities; there was the undoubted spiritual genius which made him a prophet, and the eloquence which appealed to something in his hearers, mixed with the very strong alloy of utter egotism which was for ever leading him into the most absurd follies. As usual, it is this latter side which remains vividly in one's mind. Irving certainly was merciless to his hearers. There was the famous occasion when Dr. Chalmers was requested to "open" the Regent Square Chapel, and Irving was to "assist" by reading a chapter of the Bible at the beginning of the ceremony. He began by reading one of the longest he could find, and then gave an exposition which lasted for an hour and a half. "When my turn came," Chalmers said testily afterwards, "what use could I be in an exhausted receiver?" Even in private life he could never restrain his eloquence. He once went to a supper-party given by one of his followers, and was asked (rather foolishly, considering his reputation) to read a chapter *before* supper. At midnight the guests were still hungry, and

Irving was still expounding. The host, getting fidgety, suggested that the commentary should be brought to a close. "Who art thou who darest to interrupt the man of God in his administrations?" exclaimed Irving, turning upon him in a flash, then, continuing his exposition for some time, he ended up with a lengthy prayer asking divine forgiveness for his host's offence! Let us hope that at least some of those present possessed the sense of humour that had been denied to the founder of the Irvingite Church.

Farther down the hill still is Fettes Row. The Fleeming Jenkins, familiar to us all from Stevenson's "Life" of the Professor, lived at No. 5. R. L. S. was a frequent visitor to the house in his University days, for it was Mrs. Fleeming Jenkin who first discovered that the black sheep of the Stevenson family was a genius in disguise, and Louis owed much to her and her husband's kindness.

Following the tram-lines to the foot of the hill we reach Canonmills, the scene of a little historical episode which failed to come off. Queen Victoria paid her first visit to the capital of Scotland in September, 1842. Arriving at Granton in the royal yacht, she was to drive to Edinburgh by way of Inverleith Row, and, at a barrier erected at Canonmills, the Lord Provost (with his Town Council) was to reply to her request for "free ish and entry" to the city, by presenting the keys thereof on bended knee. Elaborate arrangements were made for the ceremony. As soon as the royal yacht came in sight, a red flag was to be hoisted on the Nelson Monument on the Calton Hill, whereupon two guns were to be fired from the Castle to warn the citizens that Her Majesty would land in a couple of hours, and that it was time for the Lord Provost to don his robes and repair, with his brethren of the Council, to the barrier.

Unluckily no one seems to have inquired whether

there was a flag at the Nelson Monument, and there was not. No flag was hoisted, therefore, and the gunners stood for hours waiting at the battery, when suddenly a horseman came galloping up to the Castle with the news that Her Majesty had actually landed, and was even then on her way to the barrier. Then ensued a scene of glorious confusion. Two-thirds of the inhabitants of Edinburgh poured down the hill in cabs, chairs, omnibuses, on their feet, or in any other way they could get there. The Provost and baillies, still at their breakfast probably, for the hour was early, flung on their robes and hurried off with the rest—but it was too late. The royal carriage had long since come slowly trotting along Inverleith Row, and there was no need to knock three times upon the barrier gate, for it stood invitingly open for the Queen to pass through, without one of the civic authorites in attendance. The Royal Visit must have been rather an unpopular subject at the Town Council meetings for some time afterwards.

Crossing Canonmills Bridge, and still following the tram-lines, we come to Tanfield, a narrow lane on the left which takes its name from Tanfield Hall (almost entirely swallowed up in gasworks now), the building to which Dr. Chalmers and his following went when they left St. Andrew's Church at the Disruption in 1843, to hold their own Assembly of the Free Church. On the right is Howard Place. Thomas Stevenson and his wife settled at No. 8 in 1849, and in this house, now the property of the Stevenson Club, Robert Louis was born in 1850. Nearly opposite is Inverleith Terrace. No. 1, not the present house, but its predecessor, was occupied by the Aytouns (William Edmondstoune Aytoun, the famous contributor to Blackwood, married " Christopher North's " daughter) from 1849–53. They left it for Great Stuart Street on account of the damp, which made the house almost uninhabitable. They

were succeeded by the Stevensons, who made it their home until 1857, when they too could stand the damp no longer and moved to Heriot Row.

Inverleith Row comes next to the Terrace of that name. No. 7 was for some years, prior to the Disruption, the home of Dr. Chalmers. Judging from the numerous accounts of him, he must have been a man of great charm. Lord Cockburn, for instance, describes him as positively ugly, so far as outward appearance went, and possessed of a guttural, rather unattractive voice, all of which was redeemed by the kindly, lovable disposition, the powerful intellect, and, above all, the genial sense of humour, which endeared him to all his friends. In spite of his very broad Scotch, he was extraordinarily popular as a preacher in England as well as in Scotland, so much so that Canning, who listened to him on one occasion, exclaimed at the end, "This is true eloquence indeed. The tartan beats us all."

On the same side of the street is the entrance to the Botanical Garden, within which on top of a hill stands Inverleith House, one of the small country properties of bygone days. In the days when the Water of Leith ran through open country, high above which could be seen the jagged outline of the Old Town, Inverleith House, well away from smoke and streets, surrounded by its garden, and sheltered with fine old trees, must have been as attractive a place as any the country round could show. It belonged to the Rocheids, who were represented here in the early years of last century by the magnificent old lady so well described by Lord Cockburn. Even now, when the dusk begins to fall on a misty autumn afternoon, it would not be difficult to conjure her up as she drove away in the gorgeous mulberry-coloured coach, with the laced hammer-cloth, the bewigged coachman, and the two tall footmen who stood on the board behind. Her arrival at an Assembly

or dinner-party was an awe-inspiring sight. "She would sail like a ship from Tarshish," said Lord Cockburn, "gorgeous in velvet or rustling in silk, and done up in all the accompaniments of fan, ear-rings and finger-rings, falling sleeves, scent-bottle, embroidered bag, hoop and train—all superb, yet all in the purest taste; and managing all this seemingly heavy rigging with as much ease as a full-blown swan does its plumage, she would take possession of the centre of a large sofa, and at the same moment, without the slightest visible exertion, would cover the whole of it with her bravery, the graceful folds seeming to lay themselves over it like summer waves." A very grand dame was the lady of Inverleith, and one wonders how she kept her dignity after all the lurching and jolting she must have undergone in the mulberry-coloured coach, as it slowly and painfully ascended the rough steep roads between Inverleith and Edinburgh.

CHAPTER XVII

SOME BY-STREETS AND THE CALTON

JUST behind the Register House, hardly a stone-throw away from the east end of Princes Street, one of the noisiest and busiest spots in Edinburgh, lies St. James's Square, a quiet backwater with eighteenth-century houses, which, though dingy with the smoke of years, possess a certain dignity of their own, reminiscent of earlier days, before the fashionable population had drifted away westwards.

David Martin, the artist, who had Raeburn for his pupil at one time, lived at No. 4. In 1775, when the goldsmith's apprentice first came to the studio, Martin was very highly esteemed as a portrait painter. He had studied under Allan Ramsay, whose work was all the vogue, and it was generally considered that the mantle of Allan would fall upon David's shoulders, since the latter had hardly reached middle-age. One gathers, therefore, that he was none too pleased when he realized that he had taken a genius into his studio, and that he never gave young Raeburn much encouragement. Jealously guarding what he considered the secrets of his trade, he left his pupil to grope his way to technique, which, as it turned out, was the best thing he could possibly have done for him. He did give the boy pictures to copy, but even that came to an end when the master accused the pupil of selling one of these copies. The charge was indignantly denied, and Raeburn severed all connection with the older man. It was

difficult for Martin to assist, or even watch, the rise of a hated rival with equanimity, and he certainly lost no opportunity of sneering at " the young man from George Street," as he called him contemptuously when his ex-pupil set up a studio of his own. However, the " young man " had the best of it, for in a very short time Martin was fairly driven from the field, and, giving up his Edinburgh connection altogether, he went off to London, where he spent the rest of his life.

Burns lodged with Mr. Cruikshank, one of the High School teachers, at No. 30 during part of his stay in Edinburgh in 1787 and 1788. The attic with windows looking towards Waterloo Place is said to have been his abode, and here he was laid up for many weeks after a street accident which injured his leg. It was at this time that the " Clarinda " correspondence was ardently carried on, and in the course of which the poet complained bitterly that though she promised to give him a nod when she passed through the square, she never lifted her eyes higher than the first floor, and quite failed to see him looking down upon her from somewhere near the skies.

Leaving St. James's Square by Elder Street, one crosses York Place, and goes down the curving York Lane, which follows the line of the old Broughton Loan, a country lane that led from the east end of the Lang Dykes to the village of Broughton, and reaches Albany Street. John Playfair, the famous Professor of Natural Philosophy, whose monument is a conspicuous object on the Calton Hill, lived at No. 10, and James Ballantyne, in his last years of bankruptcy, retired to No. 18 from Heriot Row. " I had news of James Ballantyne," writes Scott in his diary in 1829, " hypochondriac, I am afraid, and religiously distressed in mind." The Ballantyne of Albany Street was very different from the prosperous, rather smug publisher of St. John Street, who lived so comfortably and gave such cheery dinner-

parties in honour of forthcoming novels by the author of "Waverley." He only outlived Scott a short time, and died, an unhappy man, in 1833.

No. 38 was Susan Ferrier's home for a good many years. The house in George Street was given up on her father's death in 1829, and after a sojourn at 30 Abercromby Place, she moved to Albany Street, and lived there till her death in 1854. She was not a particularly happy woman. Her novels brought her a considerable amount of fame, and though she always refused to be lionized, she had known well all the men and women who made Edinburgh famous a century ago. But as she grew older she began to regret the writing of her novels, from a religious point of view. She retired completely from the world, partly on that account, and partly because her failing eyesight kept her to a large extent in darkened rooms. Her wit, which had always been of a rather pungent quality, grew more acid with the passing of years, and she got the reputation of being a formidable personage, to be respected but not loved. Every now and then, however, a touch of her old humour would come out, as, for instance, when she said to her sister, who was always a popular figure, "Catherine, I don't know how it is that you have so many men about you. *I* never see a man unless it is the minister, the doctor, or occasionally the glazier." Altogether hers was a needlessly sad old age, and all the happier memories of her life belong to George Street.

Albany Lane, a further continuation of the old Broughton Loan, leads into Barony Street, at the west end of which is a curious little group consisting of one or two old houses, and a few cottages with red-tiled roofs, all that is left of the little country village of Broughton. When David I granted a charter to the monks of Holyrood, the superiority of Broughton was among the many gifts he made to them, and theirs it remained until the general distribution of church property

at the Reformation. It had its own Tolbooth, and its magistrates to boot, and in the days before the building of the New Town was considered so far out of Edinburgh that the citizens used to take " country lodgings " there for the summer. But as soon as the North Bridge was opened, its days as a village were numbered. The Broughton Loan became a street, the pond was drained, the Tolbooth was pulled down to make room for Barony Street, the little farms surrounded by thatched cottages were swallowed up by the advancing town, and now all that remains is this one corner, unknown to many of those who pass within a few yards of it.

West of Barony Street is Broughton Market, on the other side of which we come to Dublin Street, and at the foot of Dublin Street is Drummond Place, named after the famous Lord Provost, who was mainly instrumental in making the New Town possible, by means of the North Bridge. In the middle of the eighteenth century the Lord Provost's country house stood here. After that it was pulled down to make room for that place of General Scott's, Bellevue, which, according to tradition, was built for him by Sir Laurence Dundas, in payment of a gambling debt, and a most delightful property it must have been. The house and garden occupied the site of the present Drummond Place, and the grounds, rich with trees, covered the greater part of the hillside, from York Place nearly as far as Canonmills, extending eastwards to what is now Bellevue Crescent. In spite of the rapid advance of the New Town, it was fondly hoped that Bellevue might be left, an oasis of green in the midst of a desert of geometrically-planned streets, but, unluckily for the town, that was not to be. In 1802 the property came into the market and the Town Council bought it. Woodmen were set to work promptly, and in the course of a few weeks one of the chief beauties of northern Edinburgh had disappeared.

Drummond Place, which reared up its grey walls and

slate roofs from General Scott's garden, was the home of Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe, who lived at No. 28. Sir Walter Scott, who knew him well, compared him, not inaptly, to Horace Walpole. Like Walpole he was a great collector. Tapestries, armour, bronzes, pictures, china, books and curios were all housed at No. 28, and shown to the select few who belonged to the inner circle of 28 Drummond Place. At his death in 1851 there was a great six-day sale of his things, and the catalogue, some fifty pages in length, contained curious items, such as " a small box made from a leg of the table at which James VIII sat, on his first landing here," and " a hair of that true saint and martyr Charles I, taken from his coffin at Windsor " (for Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe was nothing if not an adherent of the Stuarts). Music, literature, and painting were all " cultivated " (that is the word to use for his work) by him ; he was a very fine gentleman of a school that was old-fashioned even in the early days of the nineteenth century, and like Horace Walpole once more, he left a volume or two of letters behind him, though in matter and style he is far behind his famous prototype of Strawberry Hill.

Returning once more to our starting-point at the Register House, we now go eastward towards the Calton Hill. As mentioned in an earlier chapter, the Post Office, on the north side of Waterloo Place, occupies the site of Shakespeare Square and the old Theatre Royal, which, in 1768, usurped George Whitefield's favourite preaching-ground. In 1784, on May 22, to be exact, Mrs. Siddons made her first appearance in Edinburgh. There was a great rush to secure places, and the theatre was packed, but in spite of that Mrs. Siddons found her first reception disappointing. The audience seemed astonishingly cold, and her voice " drawn direct from Heaven, and worthy to be heard there," failed to produce the outburst of applause which had always greeted her

in London. Nearly at the end of her patience she made up her mind to put every ounce of her power into one particular passage, and if that failed to move the canny Scots, she would never cross the Tweed again. At the end of the passage she paused a moment. There was dead silence. Then a voice was heard to proclaim in broad Scotch, "That's no bad!" At once there came a burst of laughter, which ended in such thunders of applause that she was nearly stunned by its violence. Never again did she have to complain of a chilly reception in Edinburgh.

On June 12 she departed for Dublin, but returned again the following year. The theatre doors, guarded by troops, became a battlefield, where heads were broken every day. Caddies spent the night on the pavement outside to secure seats for their employers the following evening. The doors had to be opened at three in the afternoon to admit the waiting crowd. Impressionable ladies fainted and had hysterics, men lost wigs, hats, watches and purses in the crowd, and, crowning revolution, the General Assembly, which met at that time, had to arrange its meetings so as not to clash with the theatre! Let us hope that all the worthy divines who had called down the thunders of the Church upon those of their brethren who had ventured to see Home's "Douglas" in 1756 were safely in their graves!

As in the days of the old Canongate Theatre, brawls in connection with political events were by no means infrequent. In 1794, when feeling ran high over the Sedition Trials which had recently taken place, and the French Revolution, all the hot blood in the audience was roused to boiling-point at the sight of a party of Irish medical students who sat down and put their hats on when "God save the King" was played. It was not the first offence, and both sides being ready for action, they fell to with ardour. Sticks, cudgels and fists were freely used, and the chairmen who bore the

wounded home in sedans, as well as the apothecaries who rendered first-aid, extracted much profit from the evening's entertainment. Walter Scott, a young advocate in those days, was conspicuous among the attacking force and gloried in the fight, laying about him as though it was a Border foray in the days of the reivers. He never forgot that night, and when, nearly thirty years afterwards, he tried to get an Exchequer appointment for a Highland lawyer, he told a friend that he had felt bound to use his influence in the man's favour, for they had fought together in the "Playhouse Row."

In 1809 Henry Siddons, son of the great Sarah, took a twenty-one years' lease of the theatre, and proceeded to offer draughts of rare vintage to his audiences. Mrs. Siddons, her brother John Kemble, Mrs. Jordan, names to conjure with, all of them, appeared one after another, not to mention Daniel Terry, Henry Siddons himself, his wife, and his brother-in-law William Murray. In 1815 Siddons died suddenly, worn out with his exertions, and his widow continued to carry on the management. But in spite of the presence of Miss Elizabeth O'Neill, who was deemed a successor to Mrs. Siddons, Edmund Kean, and the Charles Kembles, the theatre did not prosper, and a crisis came at the opening of the 1819 season when the £2000 a year rent was not forthcoming. It was then that Sir Walter Scott came forward with his dramatized "Rob Roy," and completely changed the fortunes of the Theatre Royal. Its run of forty-one nights was followed by other Waverley dramas, which, striking an entirely new note with their local colour, music, and characterization, filled the house to overflowing at each performance. "Rob Roy," as readers of Lockhart will remember, was the piece played by special command before George IV on his visit to Edinburgh in 1822, and His Majesty's applause of the "Dougal Cratur" certainly did not diminish the popularity of the play. In 1830 Mrs. Henry Siddons'

lease came to an end, and her brother William Murray took it, but failed to keep the theatre up to its former high standard. Then, after a short interval, it passed into the hands of Mr. R. H. Wyndham and brilliance revived once more, for Helen Faucit, Kean, Mrs. Stirling, Sothern, Toole, Ristori, Titiens and Mario all brightened the last years of the Theatre Royal. Its day was nearly done, however. In 1859 the Government bought the site for its new Post Office, and on May 25 of that year the curtain was rung down for the last time. Demolition was begun at once, and in a few months the scene of Sarah Siddons' triumphs belonged to the past just as much as the scene of George Whitefield's preaching.

We have lingered over-long among these vanished memories, and must pass on towards the Calton Hill. Before the year 1808 the approach to the hill was down Leith Wynd, then sharp to the right, up the steep lane, of no good repute in those days, where a group of old houses still lingers, and so up to the open hillside beyond. Immediately to the south of the lane was the Calton Burying-ground, sloping down the hill towards the Trinity Church and Hospital, which covered the ground now laid out in railway lines. Access to the newly-built Calton Jail was made the excuse for the very fine new approach from the east designed by Robert Stevenson, grandfather of R. L. S., which cut ruthlessly through the old graveyard as it went. The bones of Edinburgh citizens have not always been successful in finding a peaceful resting-place. As we saw before, the oldest burying-ground, south of St. Giles's, became a favourite duelling and brawling-ground at the Reformation and was sacrificed later to the Parliament House. St. Cuthbert's suffered when the railway through the valley below the Castle rock was made, and here, at the Calton, several cartloads of bones were dug up and removed to the new burying-ground a little farther east, when the foundations of the road were laid. The greater part

of the graveyard still survives on the south side of the road, and curiously enough there is a little patch of it left on the north side, on top of the low buildings that have been built against it, where glimpses of a tombstone or two can still be caught from the road below.

One of the most conspicuous objects in the Old Calton burying-ground is the huge obelisk put up in memory of Skirving, Margarot and his companions who were transported for sedition in 1793. Their trial was conducted by Braxfield, who gave great offence to the Whig party by the way he and his fellows administered justice. However, those were dangerous times, and the spread of the French Revolutionary doctrines to Great Britain was a very serious menace.

Of only less colossal proportions is David Hume's vaulted memorial. Some of his opponents were convinced that the devil would get his own yet, and that Hume's passing would be attended by the brimstone and sulphur, the fire-breathing horses, and the skeleton attendants that, according to popular superstition, were smelt and seen at the demise of old Dalziell of Binns. His friends, on the other hand, were of opinion that human assistance might be rendered to the powers of darkness by desecration of the newly-made grave. With this in view they kept watch and ward over him for eight nights after the funeral, with a lantern burning on the grave. It must have been a dismal and chilly vigil, but they successfully kept the philosopher from becoming an anatomical subject for medical students, which would have been a likely fate had he been left alone.

Archibald Constable is buried here, so is the worthy old shoemaker, David Roberts' father, and various other men of repute in their day.

The Calton Hill itself, the home of the first Observatory and the favourite site for early nineteenth-century monuments, is, of course, noted first and foremost for its

view, which on a clear starry evening in the winter, or on a day when the smoke is blown away by a keen north wind, is certainly a sight to be remembered. But here we are trespassing on Stevenson's ground, and all those who would have its charm and beauty put into words should turn to his " Picturesque Notes " on Edinburgh.

In 1764 the Calton Hill was the scene of Wesley's meetings. " On Saturday evening " (May 26), he wrote in his Journal, " I preached on the Calton Hill at Edinburgh. . . . The wind was high and sharp, and blew away a few delicate ones. But most of the congregation did not stir till I had concluded." On the following evening he preached there again, though the wind had risen to one of those chilly gales which are so apt to blast the merry month of May in these climes. " But I soon forgot it," he wrote, " and so did the people for an hour and a half, in which I fully delivered my soul." On the whole Scotland was disappointing to Wesley. He drew congregations of five or six thousand, and they would listen to him, standing for an hour and a half in a cold wind, but he missed the hysterical enthusiasm he was used to arousing in England. The well-balanced Scottish mind was not so completely carried away by his teaching as he hoped, and, in spite of all his efforts, Methodism never took a strong hold upon the Edinburgh temperament.

At the foot of the Calton Hill on the west side is the district of Greenside, named, it is said, from a path to Leith that ran through fields, close under the verdant slope of the hill. In these days the squalid tenements that bear the name are a strange contradiction to its former attraction. Before the Reformation a Carmelite monastery stood here, and it was their land that was chosen as the execution-place of those two heretics, Straiton and the Gourlay, who were burnt at the stake for holding the pernicious doctrines of Calvin in 1534.

The time soon drew near when the monks, instead of burning heretics, were forced to fly for their lives from the wrath of the Reformers, and Greenside knew the Carmelites no more. In 1591 their derelict buildings were turned into a lepers' hospital. Seven of these wretched outcasts were incarcerated there by way of a beginning. Incarceration it was truly, for they were forbidden on pain of death to leave the hospital or to open the door after sunset. They were each allowed 4*d.* (Scots) a week for maintenance, in addition to whatever alms might be given to them by the charitable.

Close against the hill was the tournament ground granted by James II to the magistrates and citizens in 1456, for all manner of sports and warlike deeds. It was also used, in the following century, as an open-air theatre, when Sir David Lindesay's "Pleasant Satyre of the Three Estaits" was acted there in 1544. The Queen Regent graced the scene with her presence, and the citizens looked on from the sloping hillside, applauding vigorously, no doubt, at the playwright's relentless exposure of the unedifying lives led by the Scottish clergy. The latter failed to appreciate the wit of the satire, and subsequently had all Sir David's works burnt at the Cross by the public hangman. Tournaments continued to be held at Greenside during Mary's reign, and according to one of those stories which are passed on from age to age, regardless of any foundation of fact, it was here that she first saw Bothwell, who attracted her attention by galloping recklessly down the steep hillside into the lists.

CHAPTER XVIII

LEITH WALK AND LEITH SHORE

LEITH Walk, the wide modern thoroughfare leading from the town of Edinburgh to its port, has developed out of the great rampart which the Covenanter general, Leslie, constructed in 1650 to check Cromwell in his march on Edinburgh. It served its purpose well, for the Protector, after several attempts upon the town, turned southwards again, and would have left Scotland in digust had not his unexpected victory at Dunbar put the whole of the Lowlands into his hands, so that he was able to march back into Edinburgh without the trouble of firing a shot. The ramparts, growing green with turf in the course of time, formed a favourite walk for the townsfolk long after Cromwell's occupation had become a dim remembrance, and when, in the eighteenth century, the growing trade of Leith necessitated a shorter, better road than the Broughton Loan, by which the canons of Holyrood had been wont to go to their village of North Leith, or the Easter Road, which the Logans of Restalrig, superiors of South Leith in the Middle Ages, had made, the straight line of Leslie's ramparts was used for the purpose. Houses sprang up quickly beside it, and the old pathway, a favourite haunt of footpads, who did their work unperturbed by the dismal sight of a criminal hanging in chains on the gibbet at the Gallowlee (now Shrub Hill), gradually developed into the busy street of the present day.

At No. 1 Baxters Place, on the east side, Robert Stevenson, the first of the lighthouse engineers, grandfather of R. L. S., spent many comfortable years, far enough out of the town to enjoy a large garden with an orchard running back towards the steep Calton Hill which sheltered it from the east winds.

Pilrig Street, about half-way down Leith Walk, brings us hot upon the trail of Stevenson again, for it takes its name from Pilrig House, that pleasant little country property which now stands as an oasis in the midst of streets and houses. This was the "pleasant gabled house set by the Walk-side among some brave young woods," to which David Balfour, of "Catriona" fame, went from Edinburgh in great distress of mind to seek Mr. James Balfour, the advocate, who, by the way, was none other than the great-great-grandfather of Robert Louis himself.

Pilrig Street has a connection with Carlyle too, as he lodged for a time at 2 Spey Street, one of a dismal row of houses to the left of Pilrig Street. It was in a room here that he worked at his Schiller translations, wrote to Jane Welsh, and struggled with the chronic depression that health and temperament bestowed upon him. Leith Walk was well known to Carlyle, every inch of it, so much so that he took it for the model of his Rue St. Thomas de l'Enfer in "Sartor Resartus."

At the foot of Leith Walk is the Kirkgate, set in the midst of a maze of streets and tram-lines leading in all directions. This is the entrance to the town of South Leith, though it is several centuries now since its gates and walls were pulled down.

This first entry of the old seaport is disappointing, for so little either ancient or picturesque is left, except names and memories. The first turning to the right, for instance, St. Anthony's Lane, is reminiscent of the Hospital of St. Anthony, which Sir Robert Logan founded in 1430, for the benefit of the aged and infirm,

but of the building itself and the spacious garden beyond it not a vestige is left. South Leith Church, on the right-hand side of the Kirkgate a little lower down, has suffered so severely at the hands of its early Victorian restorers that it too must rely upon memories. Built in the fifteenth century, its tower, transepts and choir were knocked to pieces by the guns of the Reformers in the siege of 1560. When peace was restored, after the death of Mary of Guise and the departure of the French troops who had held the town so gallantly, the old religion had fallen, and the new contented itself with the nave of the church, which was still intact, while the ruins formed a convenient quarry for local builders. The church thus curtailed saw the signing of the National Covenant on April 12, 1638, when the minister of Greyfriars preached to an enthusiastic congregation. Twelve years later, when the Cromwellian troops occupied Leith after the Battle of Dunbar, Monk closed the church, and turned it into a military store until the Citadel at the foot of Dock Street, in North Leith, was built. Its bells were rung in rejoicing at the Restoration ; its minister was " outed " under the stringent Acts of Charles II's reign, and replaced by an Episcopalian who, in his turn, was " outed " when William of Orange restored Presbyterianism once more. History, local history at all events, was made around it, and yet, thanks to the " restorers," little except the churchyard is left to tell of the doings of a bygone age.

Opposite the church is the Trinity House, a modern building which takes the place of the almshouse founded by the skippers and mariners of the Trinity House Incorporation for their aged brethren.

Farther down the street is Coatfield Lane where the " Lodging " of the Logans of Coatfield, a younger branch of the Logans of Restalrig, once stood. A frequent visitor at the " Lodging " was James IV, who stopped

here for dinner many a time when he had ridden down from Holyrood to see what progress was being made with the building of his new ships, for it was in his reign that Scotland possessed a navy worthy of competing with England or Portugal. Here, too, stood Balmerino House, in which Charles II stayed, as the guest of Lord Balmerino in 1650, when Cromwell was attempting to out-general Leslie. His stay was short, however, for Charles, a powerless puppet in the hands of the Covenanters, was sent away, sorely against his will, to Dunfermline for greater safety.

The Tolbooth Wynd, a modern street leading westwards to the Shore, was formerly a narrow lane, the chief access to the quay, where the Edinburgh merchants built a Tolbooth or custom-house for collecting the dues on goods landed at Leith.

The Kirkgate here turns into the narrower Water Street, out of which opens Water Close, one of the most picturesque of the old wynds still in existence. The house at the head of the Close, though it must have been considerably altered in the course of time, belonged to the Lambs, a well-known Leith family, and, according to tradition, Queen Mary, when she landed at the Shore on that chilly August morning in 1561 and found no preparations made for her arrival, was welcomed by Andro Lamb, who brought her to this house and gave her the best entertainment he could offer, until she could be escorted to Holyrood in the evening.

Opposite the Lambs' house a large modern tenement in Water Street bears the name of Mary of Guise Buildings, and occupies the site of the mansion that the Queen Regent is said to have built for herself in order to be near the French troops, when the breach with the Reformers was becoming dangerous. The presence of the French needs a little explanation. When Somerset occupied Leith for the second time, after the Battle of Pinkie in 1547, he not only burnt the town

again but left an English garrison on Inchkeith, and at several other places north of Berwick. The Scots, after their several defeats, were in no position to take the offensive, and Mary of Guise begged for assistance from France. A party of well-disciplined troops arrived at Leith, therefore, and succeeded in capturing the English forces left on Inchkeith, to the great joy of the Leith traders. In 1550 peace was made, all the English garrisons were withdrawn, and it was expected that the French would be dismissed. This, however, Mary refused to do, thinking that in view of the coming struggle with the Reformers, the presence of her fellow-countrymen would be a great asset. Leith was skilfully fortified by the French commander, d'Essé, and the inhabitants were treated very much like the population of a captured town. The best of everything was reserved for the troops, and Leith was soon heartily tired of her former friends. A request from the Reforming Party for the dismissal of the French met with a prompt refusal, and both sides prepared for war. In 1559 the siege of Leith began. The Regent, who had but a few more weeks to live, retired to the Castle, from which she watched the progress of affairs. All went well for the French at first, but Queen Elizabeth, who had no wish to see Scotland restored to the Catholic religion, sent reinforcements to the Reformers. At this point the Regent died, leaving the way clear for a treaty, by which the French agreed to withdraw, to the great delight of all the good folk of Leith, who had been brought to the point of starvation by the blockade. The fortifications were demolished, and not one trace of them or of the Regent's house is left to-day.

Water Street possesses one monument to past days in a derelict old house on the left side of the street. Although deserted now, it once saw much better days, of which a panel high up in the central gable, with an inscription surmounted by a draw-knife and other tools,

bears witness. This was the almshouse of the Incorporation of Coopers, built in 1723, at the time when Leith was freeing herself from some of the mediæval restrictions on trade, which had made it impossible for her to compete with the trade guilds in Edinburgh. The decrepit coopers, for whom the building was intended, have not found shelter within its walls for many a day, and ere long it too will have passed into the inevitable oblivion with so many of its neighbours.

Leaving Water Street we go down Burgess Close, which takes its name from the burgesses of Edinburgh who made this approach to the Shore, and established in it booths and stores for the goods landed on the quay. A few more yards and we emerge on the Shore itself, with its long row of old houses facing the Water of Leith, where the entire history of the port down to the early years of the last century can be read.

As usual, a great mental clearance is necessary. In the twelfth century South Leith, an appanage of the de Lestalric family, who then owned a long-vanished tower at Restalrig, was nothing but an irregular row of tumbledown, windowless huts on the left bank of the little river, fringing a vast expanse of sandy links and waste land. Opposite was North Leith, a little village belonging to the canons of Holyrood. A few roughly-made boats were moored to the trees that overhung the river, for it was the duty of the Abbot's vassals in North Leith to supply Holyrood with the fish which was so often required for their fast days. A little higher up the river the wheel of the Abbot's mill turned with a pleasant splashing sound as it ground the oats and bere grown in the badly-cultivated patches of farm-land between Leith and Edinburgh.

The sack of Berwick in 1296 had a great influence upon the fortunes of Leith, which now became the chief port of the east coast. The long strings of pack-horses laden with wool from the flocks belonging to the abbeys

of Melrose or Newbattle turned towards Leith instead of Berwick, and ships bound for Sluys, the port of Bruges, were moored alongside the Shore. Bruges was then looked upon as the clearing-house of Europe, and the Scottish ships, when the wool was disposed of, would return with dried fruits from Spain and Italy, wines from Bordeaux, fine cloth from Flemish looms, rich embroideries for vestments, and all the appurtenances of the more highly civilized Continental life which could not be produced in the northern kingdom. Then there was trade with the Baltic ports, Danzig, Lübeck, Stralsund and Königsberg, from whence timber was brought in exchange for Scottish hides and wool, for the Highland forests were so inaccessible in mediæval days that wood was more easily obtained from abroad.

A less welcome sight was a convoy of vessels flying the St. George of England, for when Edinburgh was held by an English garrison Leith was an important asset for the landing of troops, stores and munitions.

On more than one occasion the Shore was gaily decorated for the arrival of a queen. In 1449 Mary of Gueldres landed at Leith, and rode up Water Street and the Kirkgate to St. Anthony's Hospital, where refreshment was provided for her, on her way to meet James II in Edinburgh. Twenty years later, in 1469, it was Margaret of Denmark, the bride of James III. On Whit-Sunday evening, 1537, Magdalene of France, the consumptive daughter of Francis I, landed here with James V, who, true to the tales of chivalry and romance he loved, had gone to woo and win his wife himself, in defiance of royal etiquette. Tradition has it that as she set foot on land she knelt down and kissed the Scottish soil, beneath which she was destined to find a grave before two months were passed. Lastly, of course, there is the oft-related story of how Mary, Queen of Scots, came back to her native country in the chilly easterly haar that blew up the Forth on August 19, 1561.

But the great days of Leith were in the reign of James IV, when Scotland had a navy that captured pirates (the word pirate was given a broad significance in those days, and applied to almost any vessel flying the flag of another country), carried merchandise and did doughty deeds that made the St. Andrew's Cross a power to be reckoned with. In those days the Shore was crowded with enthusiastic onlookers when Sir Andrew Wood was descried passing Inchkeith with pennons flying from the mastheads, bringing in five English vessels captured after desperate hand-to-hand fighting at the mouth of the Forth. The same crowd, together with the King, watched the launch of the new ship "Margaret" which sailed out of the harbour on her maiden voyage in 1505. An anxious time her crew had with her too, for the Water of Leith was shallow, and it was only after nearly a hundred casks had been lashed to her hull that she would float out of the dock. It was after the launch of the "Margaret" that James had his shipyards moved to Newhaven, where a much greater depth of water could be obtained.

One is tempted to branch off into tales of the Bartons, David Falconer and Will Brownhill, those daring Leith sailormen who served James IV so well, but there is still much to be told of the doings on the Shore in later years, and the limits of space permit no digressions.

After James's death at Flodden the Scottish navy decayed rapidly, and by the time of the French occupation, in 1550, it had practically ceased to exist. It was then that merchant ships from Danzig brought strange books concealed among the cargo of timber, writings of Luther and his followers, copies of Tyndale's New Testament, and such-like forbidden literature, which was eagerly received in those vanished houses of close and quay. The French occupation and the siege which brought all trade to a standstill merely increased their leanings to the Reformed religion. South Leith church,

so damaged by gunfire already, was stripped of its altars and chantries, while the church at North Leith, built by Abbot Ballantyne in 1493, was allowed to fall into complete ruin. It was only at the end of the sixteenth century that the old church of St. Ninian, now part of a factory, and still the most picturesque object on the north side of the river, came into being, with the solid stone manse that still survives beside it.

In 1590 James VI landed at the Shore with Anne of Denmark, and as the preparations for their entry of Edinburgh, about which he had given such anxious orders, were not yet completed, they spent six days at the King's Wark, the great building, half arsenal, half dwelling-house, originally erected in the days of James I, of which the doorway at the present 37 Shore is the only surviving relic.

In 1650 a hostile crowd watched Montrose land on the Shore, a prisoner on his shameful journey to Edinburgh. Eleven years later his enemy, Argyle, arrived there, also a prisoner, though he received all the consideration which he himself had denied to Montrose. Then came the Killing Time, and the Battle of Bothwell Brig, after which two hundred Covenanters, who had survived a weary three months in Greyfriars, were marched down to Leith and there put on board the "Crown," which set sail for the Plantations. Her voyage was not a long one, however, for she was wrecked in a storm, among the Orkneys, and few of either crew or prisoners set foot on dry land again.

In 1699 another ill-fated expedition set forth. The whole of Edinburgh and Leith assembled on the Shore to see the ships set sail for Darien, bearing the hopes and the capital of the 1400 shareholders who had been led away by Patterson's descriptions of wealth uncountable simply awaiting the arrival of the Scottish expedition. Down in the hold were Bibles innumerable for the heathen Indians, with periwigs and Scottish woollen

goods for which Edinburgh traders hoped to find a ready sale among the said Indians. On deck were the settlers looking their last, most of them, on Leith and Edinburgh, knowing little or nothing of what was ahead, and more concerned with the question of founding a Presbyterian Synod on the Isthmus of Darien than the question of how they were likely to be received, or how they would live when they arrived. The awakening for them and for the shareholders at home was tragic.

Meantime the trade of Leith was ever on the increase. In 1675 Robert Mylne, of the famous family of Master-Masons, had received a grant of the waste land north of the King's Wark along which he extended the quay and built a house for himself, 10 Shore, which has survived the changes of two-and-a-half centuries. Ten years later he was given a further grant, in return for which he undertook to build a sea-wall and erect a windmill (now the Signal Tower) by which the harbour was greatly extended and made capable of accommodating ships of heavier draught.

Regular passenger traffic with London and the northern ports was established in the eighteenth century, inns sprang up, and the Shore assumed something of the aspect of a busy port. After the Union the money lost in the Darien Scheme was repaid by England, and the extra capital brought into Leith thereby helped to make up for the stagnation which followed the removal of the Scottish Parliament and aristocracy from Edinburgh to London.

The '45 affected Leith but little. Lord Balmerino and Hay of Restalrig went "out" and forfeited their lands in consequence, but the people of Leith were unenthusiastic. The Highland troops appropriated all they could find in the Tolbooth; some horses were commandeered for Prince Charlie's army, but apart from that Leith was but little concerned in the rising. Greater interest was shown the following year when

the frigate "Bridgewater" lay in the roads with Flora Macdonald on board, a much-respected prisoner *en route* for London. Although she was not allowed to land, no restrictions were placed on the number of visitors she could receive on board. Every day boats put out from the Shore with friends and admirers who hoped for a glimpse of the heroine of the hour, and it was with deep regret that they saw the "Bridgewater" sail away down the Firth. However, they had not yet seen the last of Flora, for she put in at Leith after receiving her freedom, and spent a day or two with Lady Bruce at the Citadel before going north to the Highlands once more.

After the '45 came the great development in the prosperity of Scotland. The enlarged harbour constructed by Mylne was not large enough, and it became apparent that docks must be made west of the entrance to the Water of Leith. After much discussion, the early years of the nineteenth century saw the opening of what are now called the Old Docks. From that day the Shore declined in importance. Newer and larger docks were built one after another, taking the loading and unloading ever farther from the quay that had seen so much coming and going in the past, until finally the river's mouth was given over to the few tugs and other small craft that one sees lying there to-day.

And here on Leith Shore we must leave the Romance of the Edinburgh Streets. Dismissing Leith in one short chapter is like seeing London in a day, and as to its environs, they have not been mentioned at all. Farther west lies Newhaven with its picturesque fishwives, and its memories of James IV and the "Great Michael." Farther east are Leith Links, where Charles I played golf, an example followed in later years by the Duke of York. But if we include Newhaven, we must go on to Granton, and from Leith Links our natural

course is to Restalrig, where the Logans held sway for so long. If Restalrig is included, why leave out Portobello and Duddingstone? The only reason is the one which has been before us all through the book—lack of space. That is why Leith has been dismissed in one chapter, just as, in the days when Edinburgh, as its feudal superior, ruled the port with a high hand, and only permitted its inhabitants to pick up such crumbs of trade and merchandise as her own free guild-brethren were willing to spare to them. That is why many familiar stories and legends of the Edinburgh closes have failed to find a place in these pages, and why, with apologies for all shortcomings, we write the last lines here, when so many more are required to do justice to the grey city of many memories.

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